IDW
#1
THE TRANSFORMERS
DRIFT
EMPIRE OF STONE
McCARTHY
GUIDI
BASKERVILLE
BOVE

Written by: SHANE MCCARTHY

Pencils by:? GUIDO GUIDI

Inks by:? STEPHEN

AUTHENTIC TRANSFORMERS

Special thanks to Hasbro's Clint Chapman, Heather Hopkins, Jerry Jivoin, Joshua Lamb, Ed Lane, Mark Weber, and Michael Kelly for their invaluable assistance.

IDW Licensed by: Hasbro

www.IDWPUBLISHING.com
IDW founded by Ted Adams, Alex Garner, Kris Oprisko, and Robbie Robbins

Ted Adams, CEO & Publisher
Greg Goldstein, President & COO
Robbie Robbins, EVP/Sr. Graphic Artist
Chris Ryall, Chief Creative Officer/Editor-in-Chief
Matthew Ruzicka, CPA, Chief Financial Officer
Alan Payne, VP of Sales
Dirk Wood, VP of Marketing
Lorelei Bunjes, VP of Digital Services
Jeff Webber, VP of Digital Publishing & Business Development

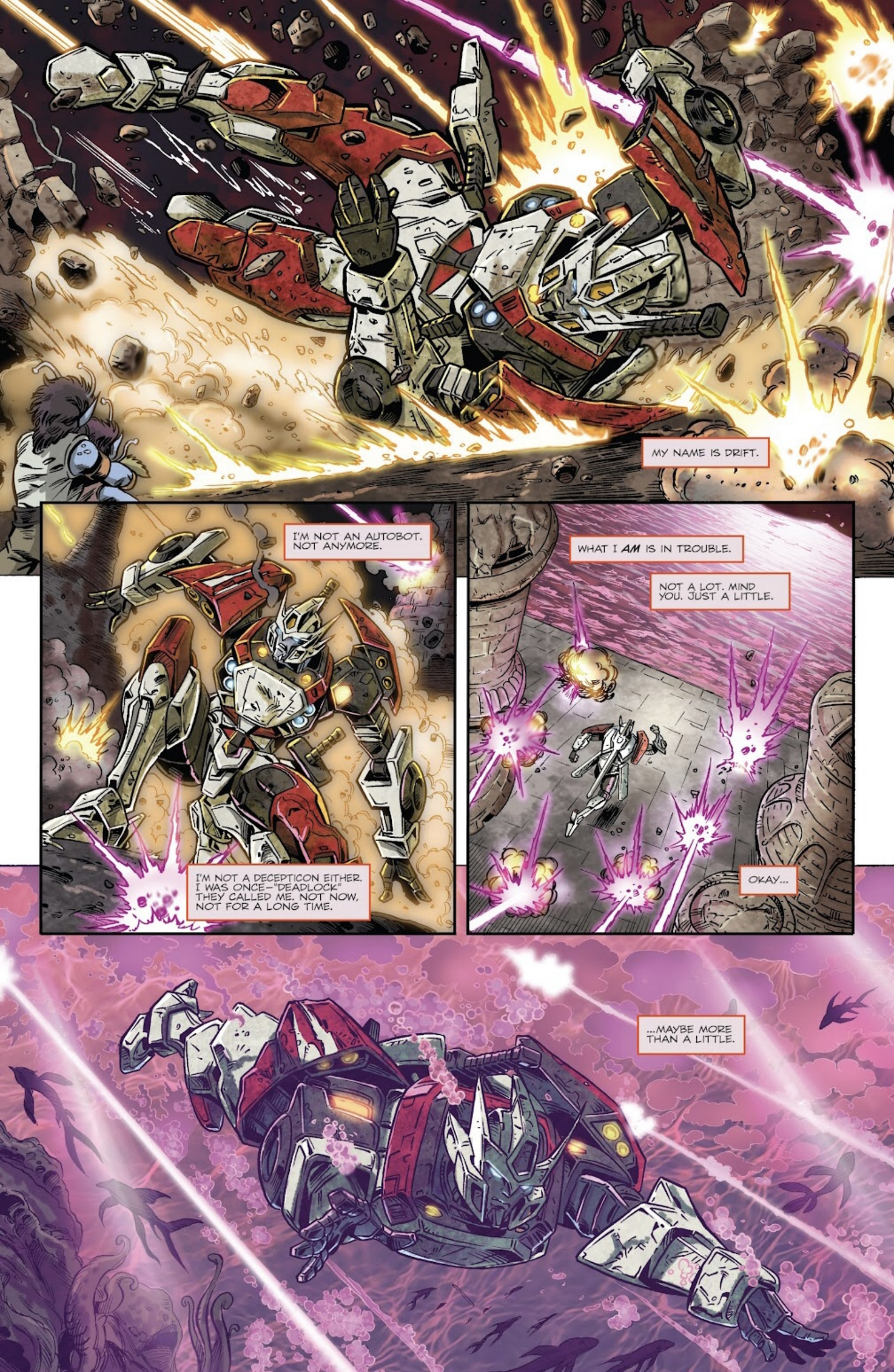
Facebook: facebook.com/idwpublishing
Twitter: @idwpublishing
YouTube: youtube.com/idwpublishing
Instagram: instagram.com/idwpublishing
deviantART: idwpublishing.deviantart.com
Pinterest: pinterest.com/idwpublishing/idw-staff-faves

THE TRANSFORMERS: DRIFT–EMPIRE OF STONE #1. NOVEMBER 2014. FIRST PRINTING. HASBRO and its logo, TRANSFORMERS, and all related characters are trademarks of Hasbro and are used with permission. © 2014 Hasbro. All Rights Reserved. IDW Publishing, a division of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Editorial offices: 5080 Santa Fe St., San Diego, CA 92109. The IDW logo is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Any similarities to persons living or dead are purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Idea and Design Works, LLC.
Printed in USA.
IDW Publishing does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork.

I'VE GOT YOU. I'VE GOT YOU.
HE WAS HURT...
IT'S OKAY, YOU DID GOOD. GOOD BOY.

YOU WERE BRAVE. CAN YOU KEEP BEING BRAVE FOR ME?

BE BRAVE NOW.


MY NAME IS DRIFT.
I'M NOT AN AUTOBOT. NOT ANYMORE.
I'M NOT A DECEPTICON EITHER. I WAS ONCE—"DEADLOCK" THEY CALLED ME. NOT NOW, NOT FOR A LONG TIME.
WHAT I *AM* IS IN TROUBLE.
NOT A LOT. MIND YOU. JUST A LITTLE.
OKAY...
...MAYBE MORE THAN A LITTLE.

KEEP AT IT, BOYS!
I'VE BEEN KICKING AROUND THE OUTER REGIONS OF THE GALAXY.
TAKING OUT THE TRASH WHEREVER I FIND IT.
WHO WAS HE, GRIT?
DON'T KNOW, DON'T CARE.
EITHER WAY, I WANT HIM GONE.
ROGUE DECEPTICONS, DIRECTIONLESS AFTER THE WAR ENDED, HAVE BEEN SETTING UP SHOP ON UNSUSPECTING PLANETS, CAUSING MAYHEM.
YEAH! NOBODY MESSES WITH—!
AARGH!
MAYHEM SUCKS.

NICE.

YOU'RE GOOD. YOU'RE A FIGHTER, HUH?
WHAT SIDE YOU ON? AUTOBOT? DECEPTICON?
GET OFF THIS PLANET, LEAVE THESE PEOPLE IN PEACE.
AUTOBOT IT IS THEN.
THIS PLANET BELONGS TO ME. I TOOK IT.
YOU WANT IT, COME GET IT...
WHENEVER YOU'RE READY TO DIE, JUST SAY THE WORD.
SHIK

WHAT SIDE AM I ON?
THEIR SIDE.
THE RACES AND CULTURES THAT DON'T HAVE A SIDE.
VICTIMS OF A WAR THEY NEVER WANTED ANY PART OF.
I KNOW THE FEELING.
WHEN YOU'RE DONE WITH YOUR BEAUTY PAGEANT, HOW ABOUT YOU TAKE US BACK TO YOUR AUTOBOT BUDDIES AND PUT US OUT OF OUR MISERY?
WHO SAID ANYTHING ABOUT AUTOBOTS?

GALACTIC COUNCIL OUTPOST WHZ-745.
THE GALACTIC COUNCIL?!

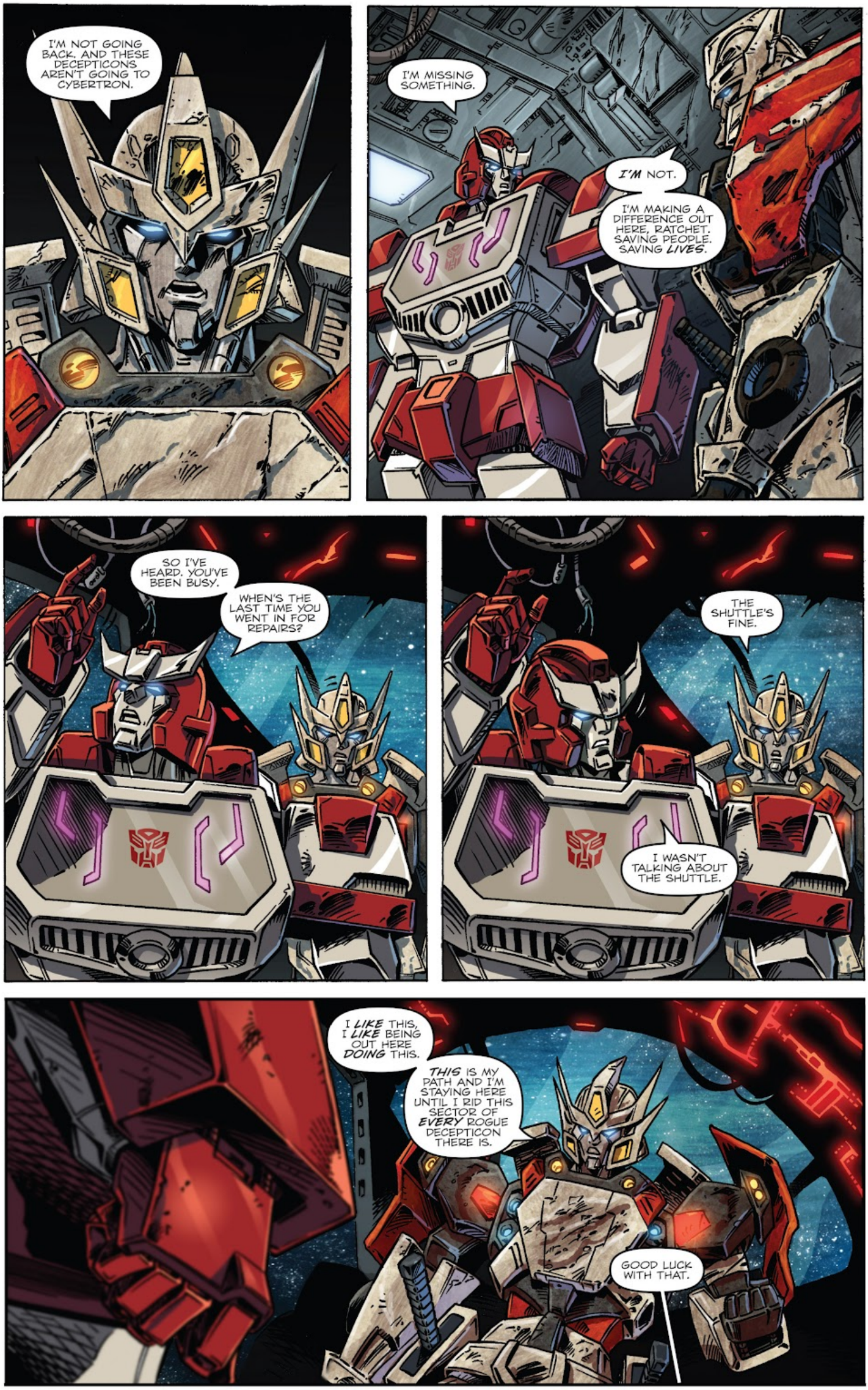
YOU'RE LEAVING US WITH THE GC?! ARE YOU NUTS?!
I DON'T WANT TO COME OFF AS RUDE HERE, BUT I THINK I'M JUST GOING TO GO AHEAD AND IGNORE THE GUY THAT ENSLAVED A PLANET FULL OF LITTLE BLUE PEOPLE.

SO TAKE US TO CYBERTRON! THERE'S RULES!
YEAH. DON'T ENSLAVE PEOPLE.
CYBERTRONIANS HANDLE OUR OWN IN HOUSE. 'CONS AND 'BOTS, WE DON'T INVOLVE OUTSIDERS, THAT'S THE RULE.

HERE'S A RULE. BE SHOOSH. HOW'S THAT FOR A RULE? IS THAT A FUN RULE?
HERE'S ANOTHER RULE, NOT ONE MORE WORD ABOUT THE GALACTIC COUNCIL.

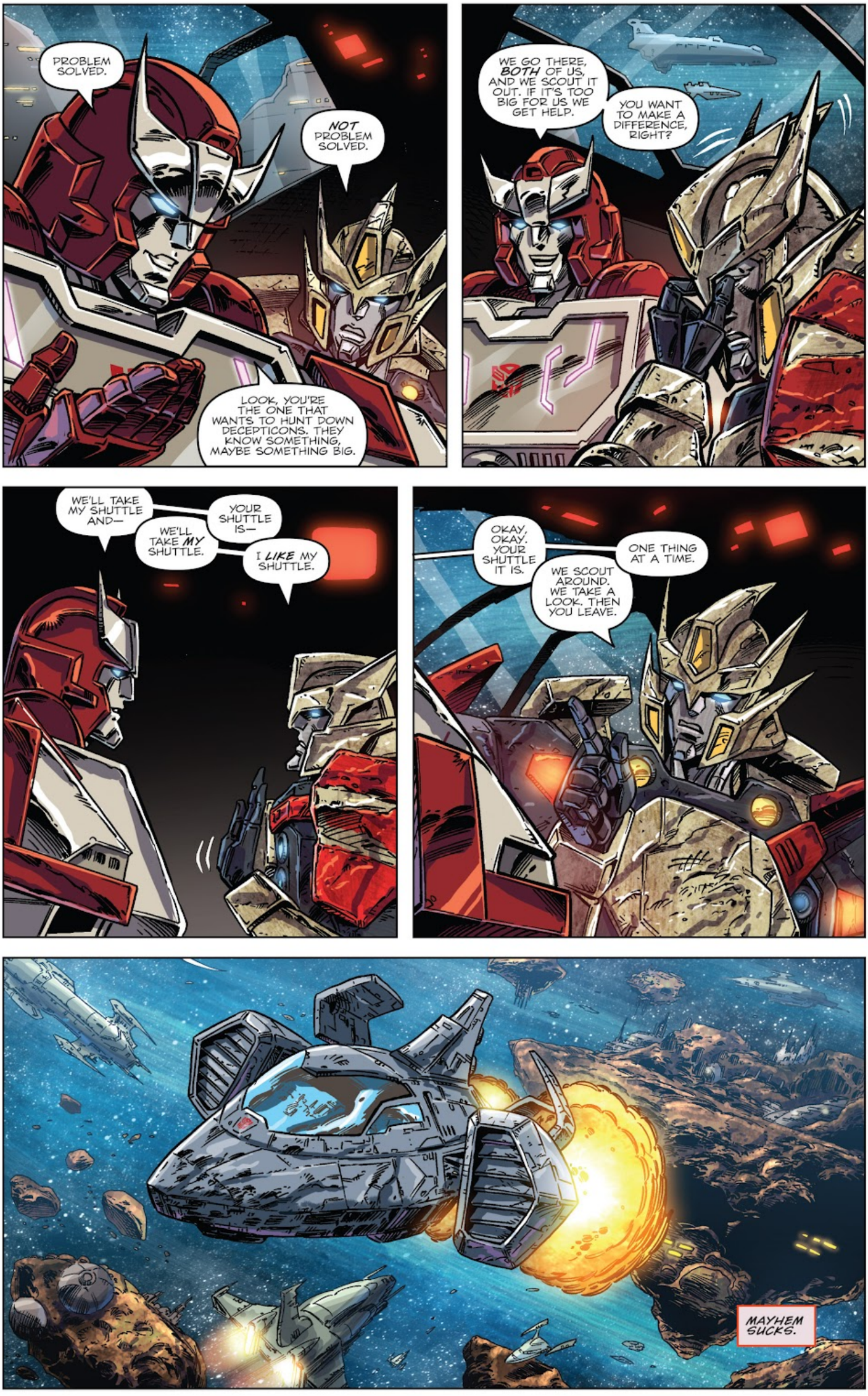
YOU CAN'T SERIOUSLY BE LEAVING THEM WITH THE GALACTIC COUNCIL!
RATCHET?!

HOW DID... HOW ARE... HOW?!
YOU'RE FLYING AN AUTOBOT SHUTTLE. I TRACKED YOU DOWN.
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING BRINGING THESE DECEPTICONS HERE?
YEAH, NO. HOW ABOUT WE START WITH YOU FIRST. WHAT ARE YOU EVEN DOING HERE?
LOOKING FOR YOU. I CAME TO BRING YOU BACK.
I'M EXILED.
FOR SOMETHING YOU DIDN'T DO. I KNOW YOU TOOK THE FALL, DRIFT.
YOU WERE FOLLOWING ORDERS.
OVERLORD, ALL OF THAT, THAT'S NOT ON YOU, WE ALL KNOW THAT NOW.
COME ON, LET'S GO BACK, WE'LL TAKE THIS LOT TO CYBERTRON WHERE THEY BELONG.
AND THEN WHAT? BACK TO THE LOST LIGHT?
BACK TO THE AUTOBOTS?

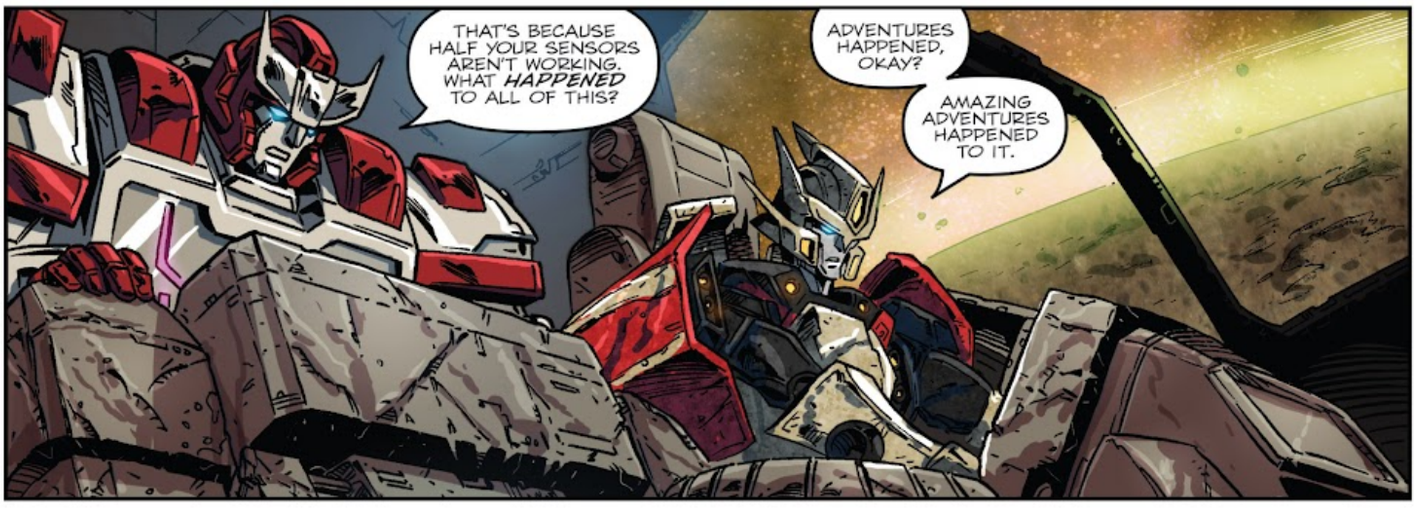

I'M NOT GOING BACK. AND THESE DECEPTICONS AREN'T GOING TO CYBERTRON.
I'M MISSING SOMETHING.
I'M NOT.
I'M MAKING A DIFFERENCE OUT HERE, RATCHET. SAVING PEOPLE. SAVING LIVES.
SO I'VE HEARD. YOU'VE BEEN BUSY.
WHEN'S THE LAST TIME YOU WENT IN FOR REPAIRS?
THE SHUTTLE'S FINE.
I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT THE SHUTTLE.
I LIKE THIS, I LIKE BEING OUT HERE DOING THIS.
THIS IS MY PATH AND I'M STAYING HERE UNTIL I RID THIS SECTOR OF EVERY ROGUE DECEPTICON THERE IS.
GOOD LUCK WITH THAT.

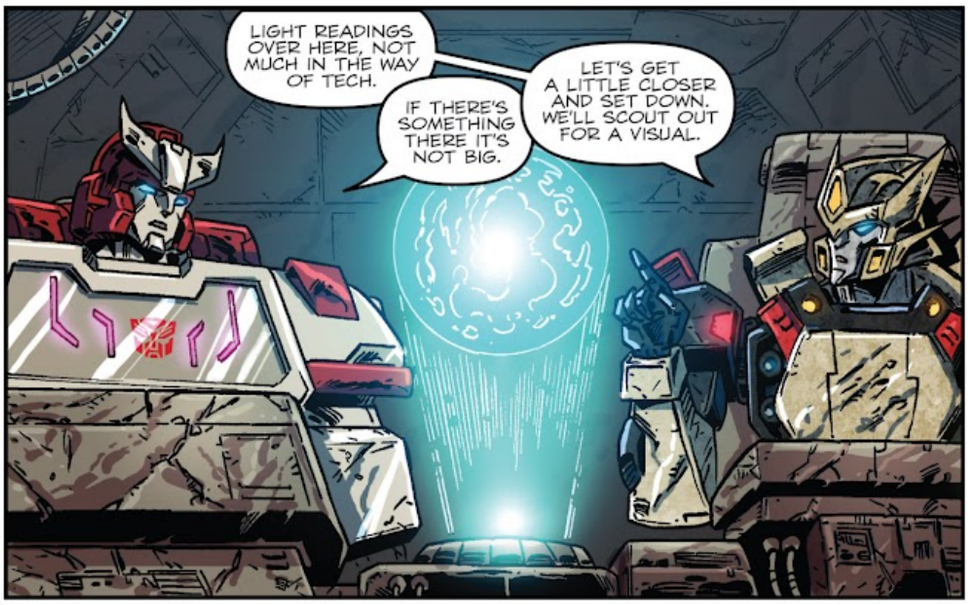
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
DECEPTICONS. WAY MORE THAN *YOU* CAN DEAL WITH, KNIVES.
WHERE?
DROP DEAD.
WHAT IF WE TAKE YOU BACK TO CYBERTRON?
THEY'RE NOT *GOING* BACK.
YOU WANT THE INFORMATION AND THEY DON'T WANT TO BE HERE. SIMPLE.
TELL US WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW AND WE'LL TAKE YOU BACK. NO GC.
RATCHET...
SO I TELL YOU WHAT YOU WANNA KNOW AND YOU GET US OUTTA HERE? I HAVE YOUR WORD?
YOU DO.
THEN YOU CAN *BOTH* DROP DEAD.

I'M A DECEPTICON. I AM STRONG AND I AM POWERFUL.
TORTURE ME, LOCK ME UP... I DON'T CARE. YOU CAN MAKE ME STEW IN A GALACTIC COUNCIL PRISON FOR A MILLION YEARS AND I AIN'T EVER GONNA RAT.
I'LL RAT!
CAN I RAT?
WHAT?!
ME, TOO! I'LL RAT AS WELL PLEASE.
YOU KNOW WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT?
YES.
NO!
THERE'S A HIDEOUT, A DECEPTICON HIDEOUT.
SHUT UP!
YOU KNOW WHERE IT IS?
...YES...
YOU'LL TAKE US THERE?
ARRGH!
...YES...


PROBLEM SOLVED.
NOT PROBLEM SOLVED.
LOOK, YOU'RE THE ONE THAT WANTS TO HUNT DOWN DECEPTICONS. THEY KNOW SOMETHING, MAYBE SOMETHING BIG.
WE GO THERE, BOTH OF US, AND WE SCOUT IT OUT. IF IT'S TOO BIG FOR US WE GET HELP.
YOU WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, RIGHT?
WE'LL TAKE MY SHUTTLE AND—
WE'LL TAKE MY SHUTTLE.
YOUR SHUTTLE IS—
I LIKE MY SHUTTLE.
OKAY, OKAY. YOUR SHUTTLE IT IS.
WE SCOUT AROUND. WE TAKE A LOOK. THEN YOU LEAVE.
ONE THING AT A TIME.
MAYHEM SUCKS.

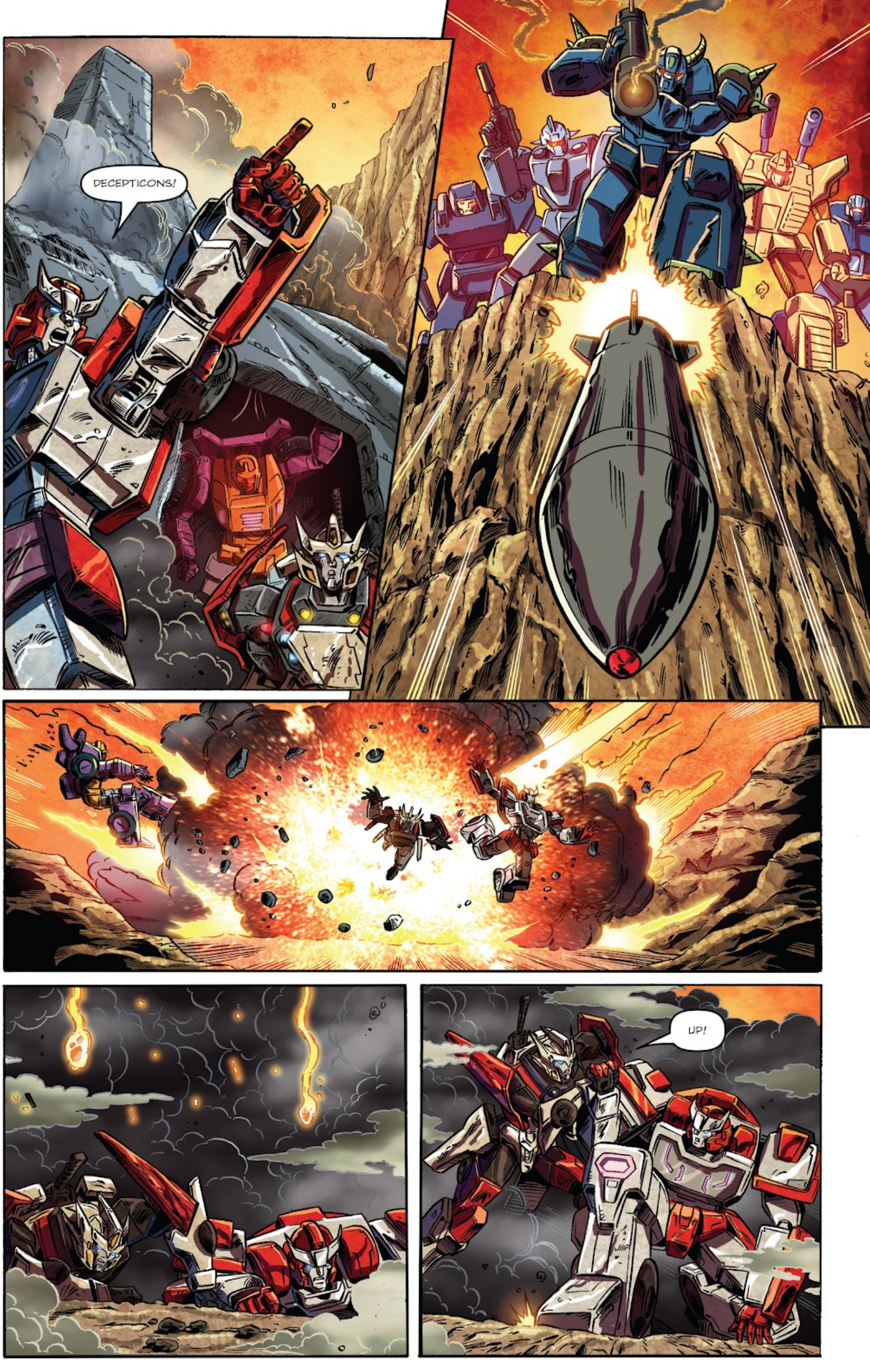
NOT GETTING MUCH OF A READOUT FROM THE PLANET.


THAT'S BECAUSE HALF YOUR SENSORS AREN'T WORKING. WHAT *HAPPENED* TO ALL OF THIS?
ADVENTURES HAPPENED, OKAY?
AMAZING ADVENTURES HAPPENED TO IT.


LIGHT READINGS OVER HERE, NOT MUCH IN THE WAY OF TECH.
IF THERE'S SOMETHING THERE IT'S NOT BIG.
LET'S GET A LITTLE CLOSER AND SET DOWN. WE'LL SCOUT OUT FOR A VISUAL.

WOOP WOOP WOOP WOOP
WHAT'S THAT?!
SOMETHING BIG!

THE CELL!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT! OUT—
—GET OUT!


DECEPTICONS!
UP!

GO!
"LIGHT READINGS." "NOT MUCH IN THE WAY OF TECH."
YOU KNOW, YOU SHOULDN'T LIVE IN THE PAST. THERE IS ONLY THE TRUE MOMENT IN WHICH WE'RE CURRENTLY LIVING.
YOU TALK LIKE THAT TO DELIBERATELY ANNOY ME, DON'T YOU?
PRETTY MUCH.
HEY! WHOA!
WHAT IS THIS? I'M A DECEPTICON!
IN AN AUTOBOT SHUTTLE, WITH AUTOBOTS.
I WAS A PRISONER!
AND NOW YOU'RE GOING TO BE A DEAD PRISONER.
WE KNOW DECEPTICONS ARE WORKING WITH AUTOBOTS NOW. YOU DON'T FOOL US. YOU'RE GOING TO DIE.

THEY'RE GOING TO KILL HIM!
BETTER HIM THAN US.
BETTER *NONE* OF US.
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS.
DRIFT, THERE'S FIVE 'CONS DOWN THERE. *FIVE.* PLUS THE OTHER ONE WHO'LL TURN ON YOU IN A HEARTBEAT.
I'M NOT GOING TO STAND BY AND WATCH AN EXECUTION.
WHAT *IS* THIS, SOME KIND OF DEATH WISH?
THERE'S NO POINT IN LIVING IF YOU SACRIFICE EVERYTHING YOU ARE TO DO IT.

ENOUGH!

BRING THEM.
ALL OF THEM.
NO...

DEADLOCK, HOW NICE OF YOU TO JOIN US.
NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE, WE CAN FINALLY TEAR THIS SYSTEM APART...
...TOGETHER.

IDW
THE TRANSFORMERS
#2
McCARTHY
GUIDI
BASKERVILLE
BOVE
DRIFT
EMPIRE OF STONE

THE TRANSFORMERS DRIFT EMPIRE OF STONE

Cast off from the Autobots after taking the blame for a crime he didn't commit, the former Decepticon Drift wanders the galaxy righting wrongs—most recently, capturing a group of Decepticons led by Grit. Joined by Drift's old frenemy Ratchet, they follow a lead to Grit's base of operation—a remote world where they're all captured by a Deception warlord... who recognizes Drift from the old days.

Written by: SHANE MCCARTHY
Breakdowns by: GUIDO GUIDI
Finishes by: STEPHEN BASKERVILLE
Colors by: JOHN-PAUL BOVE
Letters by: TOM B. LONG
Editor: JOHN BARBER

AUTHENTIC TRANSFORMERS

Special thanks to Hasbro's Clint Chapman, Heather Hopkins, Jerry Jivoin, Joshua Lamb, Ed Lane, Mark Weber, and Michael Kelly for their invaluable assistance.

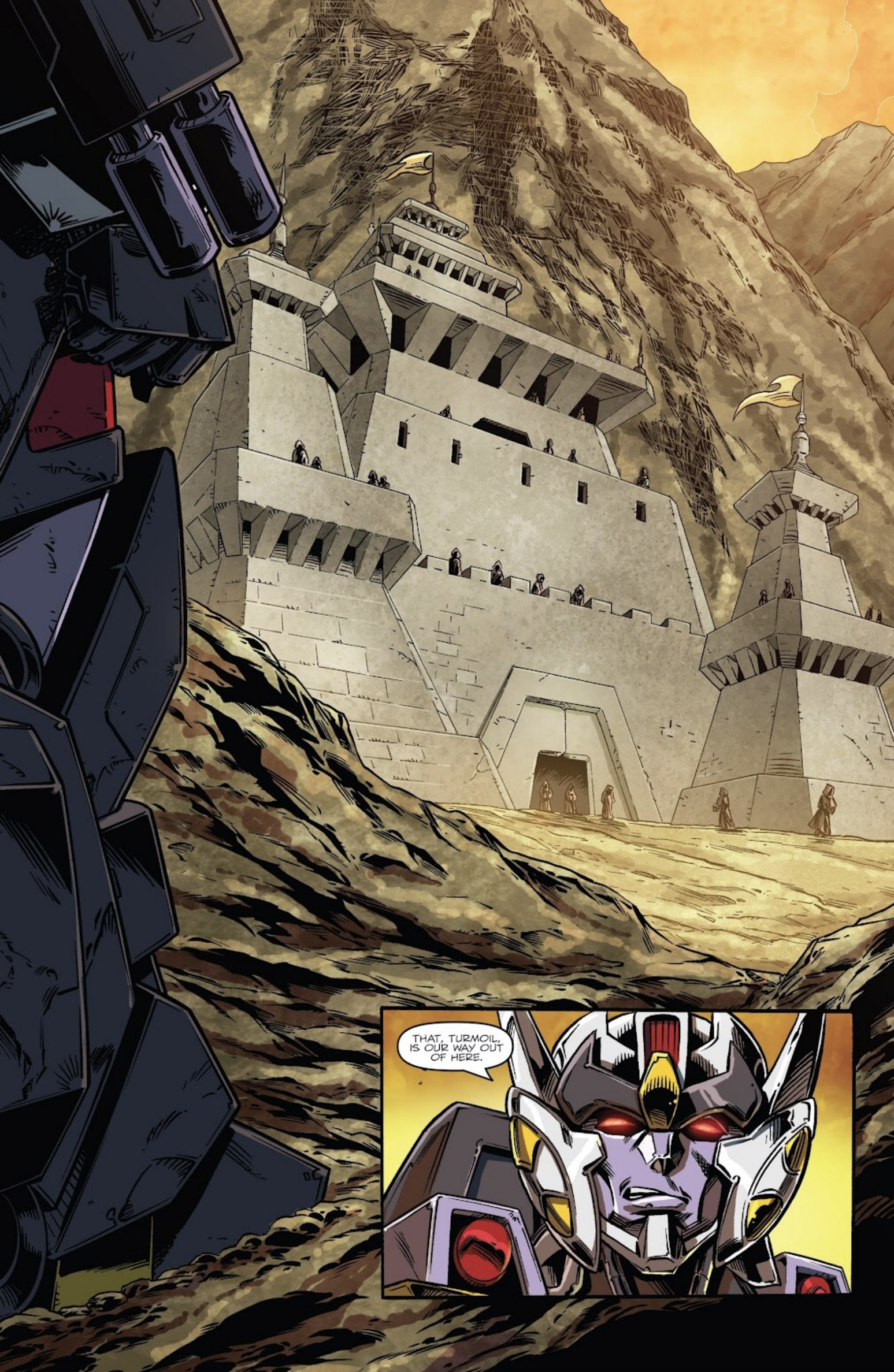
IDW Licensed By: Hasbro
www.IDWPUBLISHING.com
IDW founded by Ted Adams, Alex Garner, Kris Oprisko, and Robbie Robbins

Ted Adams, CEO & Publisher
Greg Goldstein, President & COO
Robbie Robbins, EVP/Sr. Graphic Artist
Chris Ryall, Chief Creative Officer/Editor-in-Chief
Matthew Ruzicka, CPA, Chief Financial Officer
Alan Payne, VP of Sales
Dirk Wood, VP of Marketing
Lorelei Bunjes, VP of Digital Services
Jeff Webber, VP of Digital Publishing & Business Development

Facebook: facebook.com/idwpublishing
Twitter: @idwpublishing
YouTube: youtube.com/idwpublishing
Instagram: instagram.com/idwpublishing
deviantART: idwpublishing.deviantart.com
Pinterest: pinterest.com/idwpublishing/idw-staff-faves

THE TRANSFORMERS: DRIFT—EMPIRE OF STONE #2. DECEMBER 2014. FIRST PRINTING. HASBRO and its logo, TRANSFORMERS, and all related characters are trademarks of Hasbro and are used with permission. © 2014 Hasbro. All Rights Reserved. IDW Publishing, a division of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Editorial offices: 5080 Santa Fe St., San Diego, CA 92109. The IDW logo is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Any similarities to persons living or dead are purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Printed in USA.

CENTURIES AGO.
GUIDANCE SYSTEMS ARE OUT.
COMMUNICATIONS ARE OUT. BOOSTERS ARE OUT.
NO WAY TO ACHIEVE ESCAPE VELOCITY. NO WAY TO REPORT BACK TO GIGATRON...
DEADLOCK?
YOU HEAR ME?
ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING?!
WHAT IS THAT?


THAT, TURMOIL, IS OUR WAY OUT OF HERE.

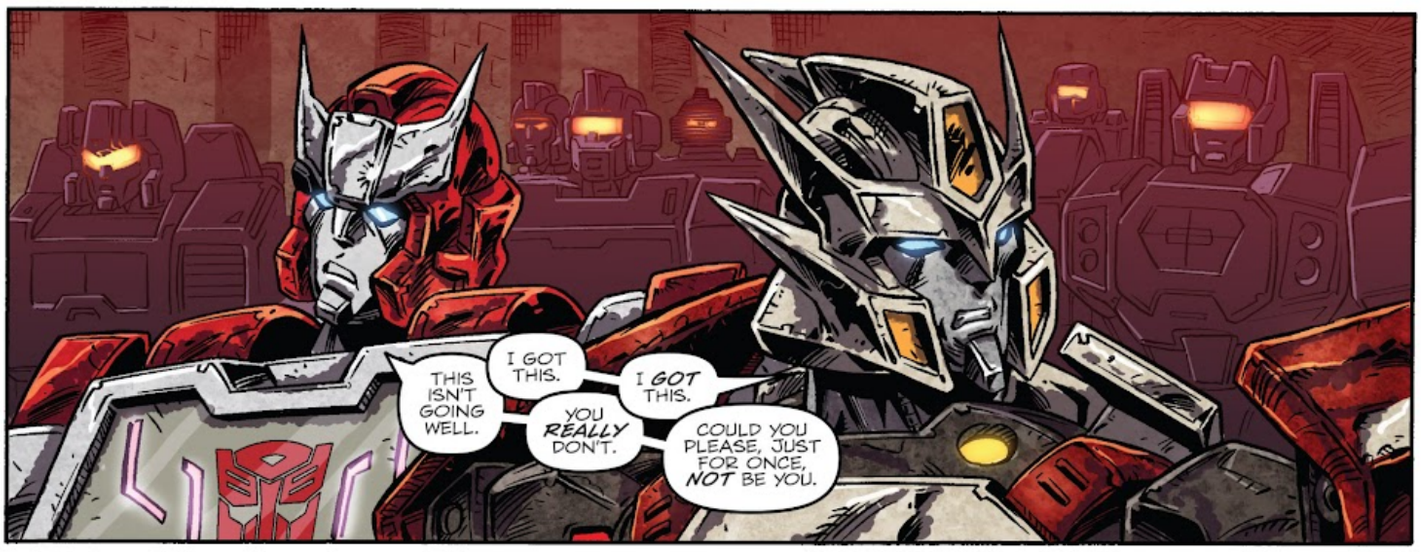
MY NAME IS DRIFT. I USED TO BE A DECEPTICON CALLED DEADLOCK. AFTER THAT I WAS AN AUTOBOT. NOW I'M, WELL... CONFUSED.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "TEAR THIS SYSTEM APART"?
I MEAN I PLAN TO STRIP IT BARE.
I NEED TO FORTIFY MY POSITION, INCREASE THE DECEPTICON MILITARY PRESENCE IN THIS REGION.
FOR WHAT?
TO WIN THIS WAR.
THE WAR IS OVER.
SLASH!

YOU KNOW MEGATRON AS WELL AS I DO.
TELL ME, DEADLOCK, IS THIS WAR OVER?
I'M NOT DEADLOCK, NOT ANYMORE.
BAH.
IF I'M TO CONQUER THIS SYSTEM I NEED TO INCREASE MY NUMBERS.
YOU WERE HERE, CENTURIES AGO WITH TURMOIL.
YOU SPOKE OF A VAST STONE ARMY, HIDDEN HERE, RIPE FOR THE PICKING.
MEGATRON REFUSED TO SEE ITS USEFULNESS THEN. HOWEVER I NEED THAT ARMY... NOW.
I'VE SEARCHED THIS PLANET HIGH AND LOW AND FOUND NOTHING.
YOU KNOW WHERE IT IS, DEADLOCK; YOU WILL TELL ME WHERE IT IS AND WE WILL USE IT TO PREPARE OURSELVES FOR THE COMING CONFLICT.
I TOLD YOU, I'M NO LONGER—
ENOUGH!
SAVE YOUR LIES.

YOU'RE NOT ONE OF THOSE AUTOBOT *THINGS*.
LISTEN—
THEY'RE NOT LIKE US, DEADLOCK, THEY'RE NOTHING LIKE US...
STOP!
I'LL SHOW YOU WHERE IT IS. LET THEM GO. THE ARMY, IT'S HERE ON THIS PLANET.
LET THEM ALL GO AND I'LL SHOW YOU WHERE IT IS.
YOU'LL DO AS I SAY? YOU WILL END YOUR CHARADE?
I WILL!

MEGATRON... YOU... YOU'RE ALL SO CONFUSED.
WHY? WAR IS SO SIMPLE.
RELEASE THEM.
GIGATRON, IF I MAY, ARE YOU SURE THIS IS WISE?
YOU WOULD RECOMMEND CAUTION, HELLBAT?
SURELY WE CANNOT TRUST HIM.
DEADLOCK DROPS INTO OUR LAPS BY PURE CHANCE AND YOU WISH TO IGNORE IT?
BUT, TO LET AN AUTOBOT GO FREE...
WHAT DO I CARE IF ONE GOES FREE? SOON I WILL KILL THOUSANDS.
AND THE TRAITOR?
TRAITOR?!
WHOA WHOA WHOA, I'M NO TRAITOR.
GRIT...
NO TRAITOR, YOU SAY, YET HERE YOU STAND, SIDE BY SIDE WITH AUTOBOTS. ONE OF WHICH SAVED YOU ONCE AND ATTEMPTS TO SAVE YOU AGAIN.
I'M NOT WITH THEM. THEY TOOK ME PRISONER.
SINCE WHEN IS WEARING THIS SYMBOL EVER BROUGHT INTO QUESTION?
SINCE DECEPTICONS IN THE CENTRAL SYSTEMS CHOSE TO WORK ALONGSIDE THEIR ENEMIES.

I'M NO AUTOBOT. WHERE DO YOU GET OFF—DECEPTICONS DON'T *SLAUGHTER* THEIR OWN KIND FOR NO GOOD REASON AT ALL.
BETRAYAL IS NO GOOD REASON?
WHAT? *NO.* DON'T TWIST MY WORDS!


THIS ISN'T GOING WELL.
I GOT THIS.
I *GOT* THIS.
YOU *REALLY* DON'T.
COULD YOU PLEASE, JUST FOR ONCE, *NOT* BE YOU.

SO YOU'RE A DECEPTICON THEN? POWERFUL, RUTHLESS...
YES.
UNYIELDING.
YES.

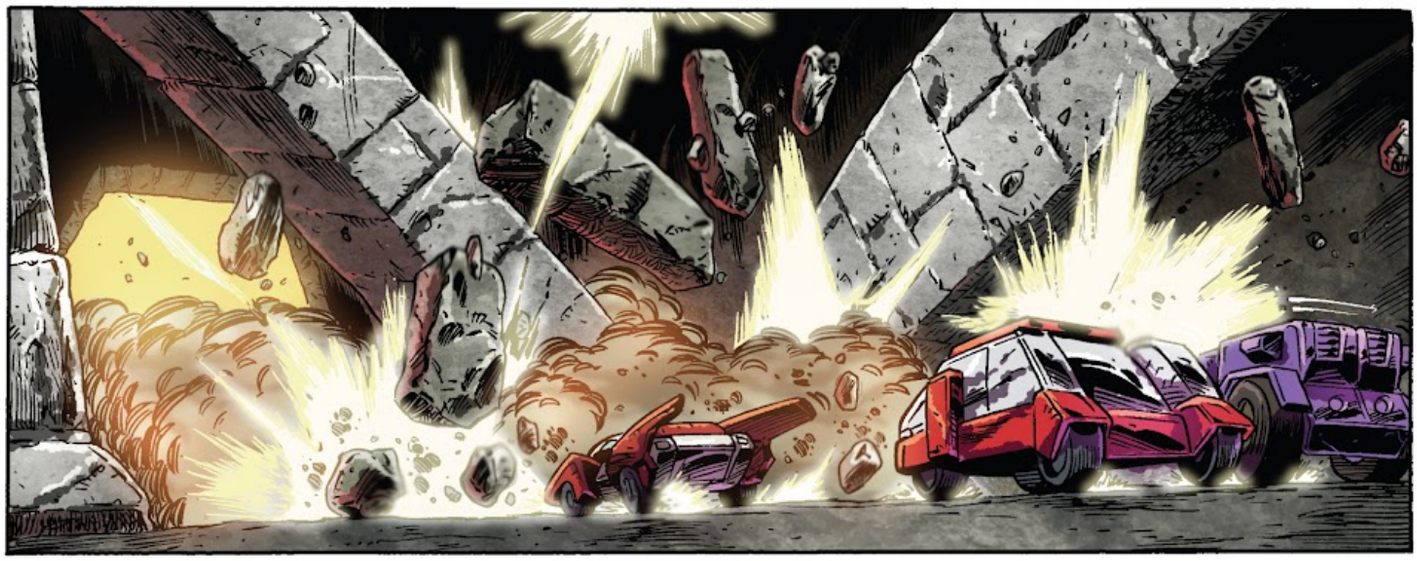
AND YET HERE YOU ARE, THEIR *PRISONER.* SO IF YOU'RE NOT A TRAITOR WHAT ARE YOU?
BECAUSE YOU *CERTAINLY* DON'T DESERVE TO BE A DECEPTICON.

HE DID *NOT* JUST SAY THAT.

THAT WASN'T VERY SMART.
I DON'T DO SMART.
CAPTURE THEM NOW!
IF WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE, NOW'S THE TIME.

THERE IS NO CHANCE WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE ALIVE.
THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE.

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!



GIGATRON, NO! WE NEED THEM ALIVE.
LEAVE THEM WITH ME AND YOU WILL HAVE THE ANSWERS YOU SEEK.
I PROMISE YOU.

AS ALWAYS, HELLBAT, YOUR CALMER HEAD PREVAILS. I AM THANKFUL.
REMOVE THEM FROM MY SIGHT.

"I GOT THIS," THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID, I WAS THERE AND YOU SAID THAT. "I GOT THIS."
WHY DO THINGS ALWAYS END UP WITH YOU YELLING AT ME?
BECAUSE THIS IS YOUR FAULT! YOU COULDN'T JUST COME BACK TO THE *LOST LIGHT*?
I'M GOING TO RIP HIS HEAD OFF. CLEAN OFF. WITH MY HANDS. I'M GOING TO RIP IT OFF AND TEAR HIM APART. "TRAITOR"?! HE'S ***DEAD***.
YOU'RE A BIT OF A DARK KIND OF GUY, AREN'T YOU.
NONE OF THIS MAKES SENSE, HOW HAVE THEY NOT FOUND THE ARMY YET?
WHAT ***IS*** THIS ARMY?
IT'S A ***HUGE*** STONE ARMY, THEY'RE ASLEEP OR SWITCHED OFF OR WHATEVER. THEY WERE HERE YEARS AGO WHEN TURMOIL AND I CRASHED HERE.
THEY'RE LIFEFORMS JUST LIKE US BUT THEY'RE STONE...
AND THEY DON'T CHANGE INTO ANYTHING.
STONE.

IF GIGATRON FINDS THAT ARMY AND MANAGES TO USE IT, MILLIONS OF INNOCENT CREATURES IN THIS SYSTEM WILL DIE.
I'M SUPPOSED TO BE STOPPING THIS SORT OF THING FROM HAPPENING NOT HELPING IT!
THE GUARD IS COMING. QUICKLY, GET ON THE GROUND!
WHAT?
ON THE GROUND, GET ON THE GROUND AND BE DEAD.
DEAD! BE DEAD!
WHAT?!
HOW COULD YOU?! IF YOU KILLED HIM...!
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!

HE ATTACKED HIM, THAT'S WHAT!
WHAT?
HE'S DYING! YOUR BOSS IS GOING TO BE FURIOUS IF HE LOSES HIS CHANCE AT FINDING THAT ARMY.
WELL?!
WELL WHAT?
I'M SUPPOSED TO BE SHOCKED, OPEN THE CELL, AND RUN IN THERE SO YOU CAN HIT ME ON THE HEAD AND ESCAPE?
THAT GUY'S NOT EVEN DYING.

LOOK AT HIM, HE'S FINE.
YOU DON'T KNOW!
HOPELESS.
UM...
HEY.
KNOCKOUT, HOW'S THINGS?
NOT BAD, I GUESS.
YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER?
KNOCKOUT AND I GO WAY BACK.
I'M NOT LETTING THEM KILL A FRIEND OF MINE.
WHAT'S *THAT* ALL ABOUT?

IT'S CRAZY. THIS GROUP IS *INTENSE*.
THEY'RE CAPTURING AND KILLING AUTOBOTS *AND* DECEPTICONS.
I NEVER SHOULD HAVE JOINED UP.
BEEN THINKING I SHOULD GET OUT OF HERE AS IT IS AND NOW THEY GO AND DO THIS TO YOU.

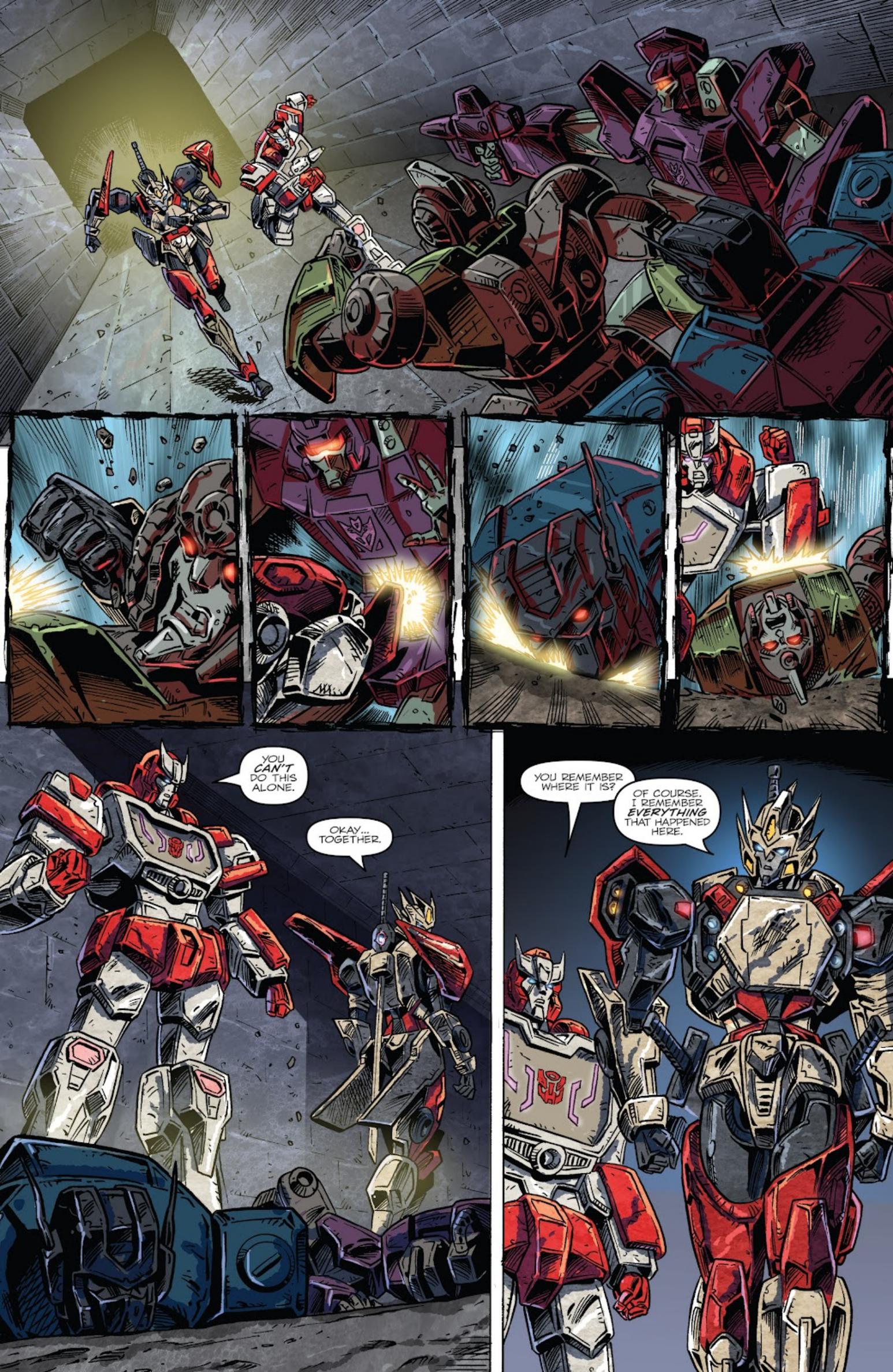
YOU NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE, OFF THIS PLANET.
I WON'T FORGET THIS.

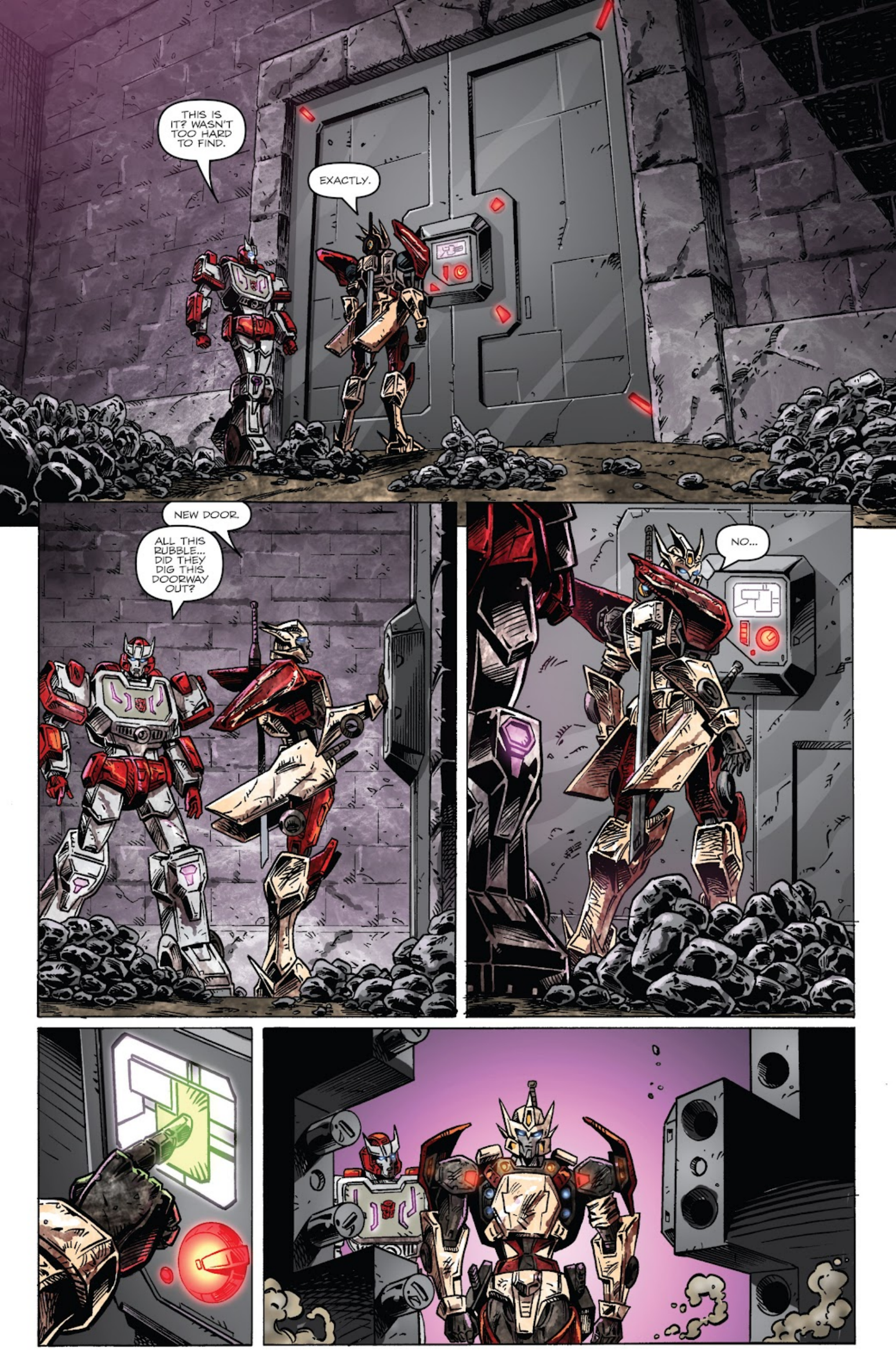
WE NEED TO FIND A SHIP...
YOU NEED.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

I *TOLD* YOU, I'M GOING TO KILL HIM.
KILL HELLBAT? ARE YOU *CRAZY*?!
WE NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE *NOW*.

YOU DO THINGS YOUR WAY, LET ME DO THINGS MINE.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY.
LISTEN, KNIVES, YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT ME, OKAY?
I KNOW WHAT I AM. YOU'VE GOT YOUR OWN ISSUES, I GET IT, DON'T PUT 'EM ON ME.
RIGHT, WE GET TO A SHIP AND WE GET *OUT* OF HERE BEFORE HE BRINGS THIS WHOLE PLACE DOWN ON US.
YOU GET TO A SHIP, RATCHET. WARN THE OTHERS.
YOU *DIDN'T* JUST SAY THAT.

YOU'RE INSANE!
NO. NO. YOU NEED TO STOP THIS NOW.
RATCHET, HEAR ME OUT...
STOP WHAT?
ALL OF THIS.
YOU'RE A WRECK, YOU'RE RUNNING YOURSELF INTO THE GROUND, RISKING YOUR LIFE AND FOR WHAT?
WHERE IS THIS COMING FROM?
DID KICKING YOU OUT OF THE AUTOBOTS REALLY HAVE THIS MUCH OF AN IMPACT ON YOU?
IT'S HERE, RATCHET, THE ARMY IS HERE, RIGHT IN THIS FORTRESS, IT'S RIGHT HERE.
IT'S NOT HIDDEN, IT'S IN THIS BUILDING AND THEY HAVEN'T FOUND IT AND IT MAKES NO SENSE.
THEN WE FIND IT TOGETHER!
NO, YOU—
TOGETHER! YOU WANT TO SAVE PEOPLE THEN SAVE THEM!
BUT STOP TRYING TO GET YOURSELF KILLED IN THE PROCESS BECAUSE YOU'RE NO GOOD TO ANYONE DEAD!


YOU CAN'T DO THIS ALONE.
OKAY... TOGETHER.
YOU REMEMBER WHERE IT IS?
OF COURSE. I REMEMBER EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED HERE.

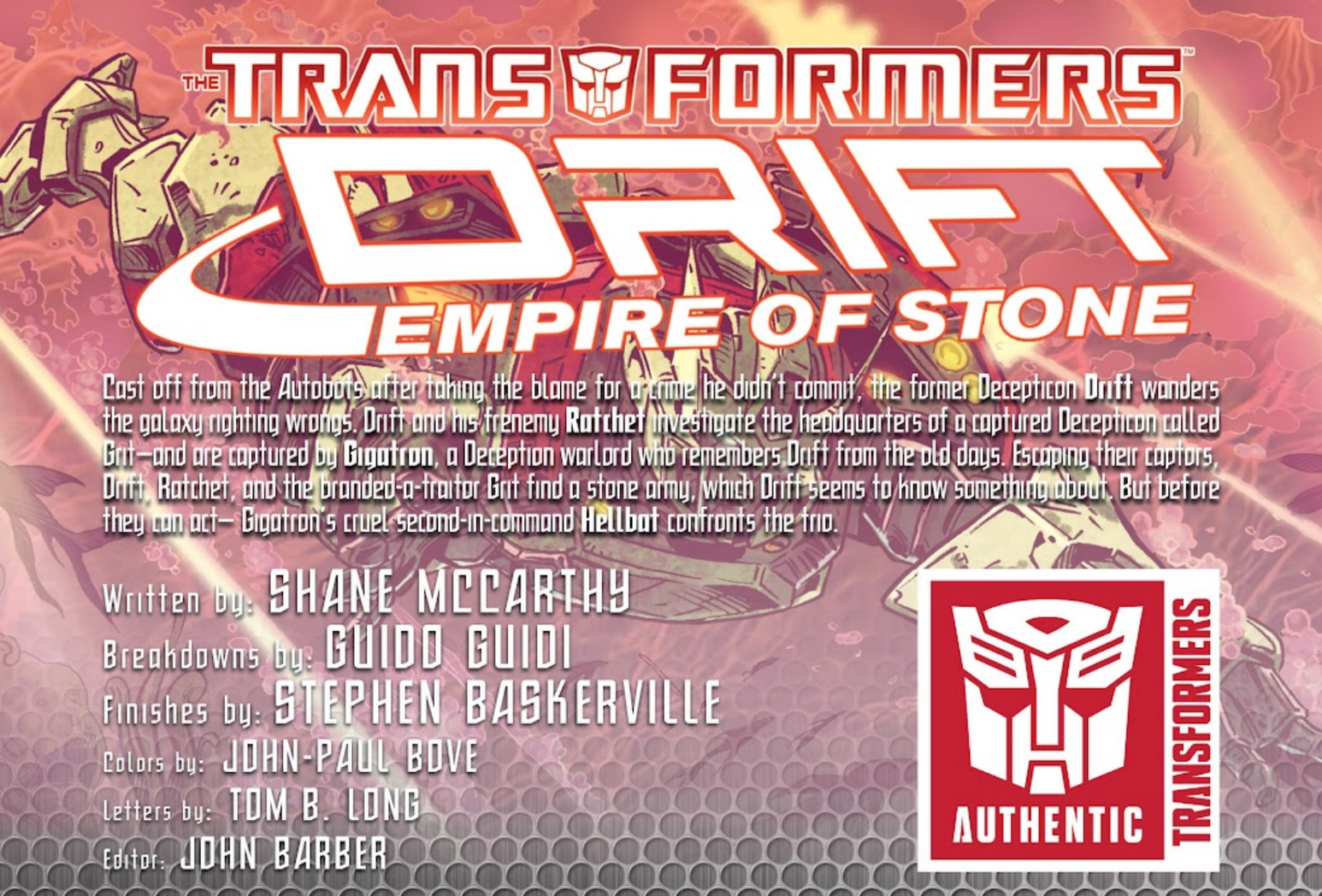

THIS IS IT? WASN'T TOO HARD TO FIND.
EXACTLY.
NEW DOOR.
ALL THIS RUBBLE... DID THEY DIG THIS DOORWAY OUT?
NO...

WHOA...
THAT'S SOME ARMY.
THERE'S NEW TECH HERE.
THIS ISN'T HOW IT WAS.
WHAT'S GOING ON?
I'LL HAPPILY TELL YOU, DRIFT...

IT'S NOT AS THOUGH YOU'LL BE ALIVE FOR MUCH LONGER.

THE TRANSFORMERS
DRIFT
EMPIRE OF STONE
#3
ONCE A DECEPTICON!
DRIFT's past comes back to haunt him, as RATCHET tries to drag him back to the *Lost Light.* But alone on a far-off world, DRIFT's honor demands he stand his ground!
Licensed By:
IDW
Hasbro
www.idwpublishing.com
HASBRO and its logo, TRANSFORMERS, and all related characters are trademarks of Hasbro and are used with permission. © 2014 Hasbro. All Rights Reserved.
COMIC SHOP LOCATOR SERVICE
COMICS
888-COMIC-BOOK
comicshoplocator.com

IDW
#3
THE TRANSFORMERS
DRIFT
EMPIRE OF STONE
McCARTHY
GUIDI
BASKERVILLE
BOVE



Cast off from the Autobots after taking the blame for a crime he didn't commit, the former Decepticon **Drift** wanders the galaxy righting wrongs. Drift and his frenemy **Ratchet** investigate the headquarters of a captured Decepticon called Grit—and are captured by **Gigatron**, a Deception warlord who remembers Drift from the old days. Escaping their captors, Drift, Ratchet, and the branded-a-traitor Grit find a stone army, which Drift seems to know something about. But before they can act— Gigatron's cruel second-in-command **Hellbat** confronts the trio.

Written by: SHANE MCCARTHY
Breakdowns by: GUIDO GUIDI
Finishes by: STEPHEN BASKERVILLE
Colors by: JOHN-PAUL BOVE
Letters by: TOM B. LONG
Editor: JOHN BARBER

AUTHENTIC TRANSFORMERS

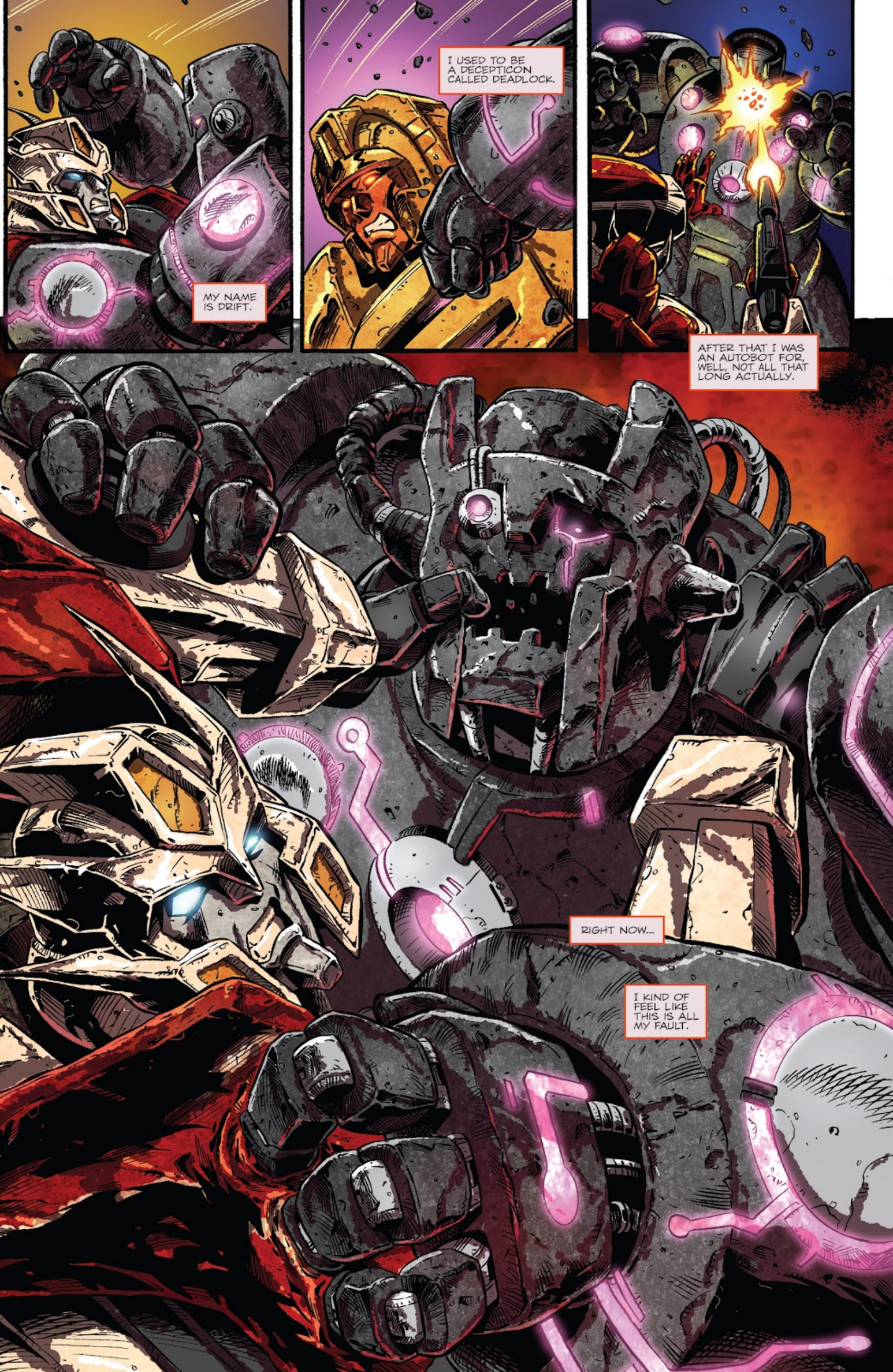
Special thanks to Hasbro's Clint Chapman, Heather Hopkins, Jerry Jivoin, Joshua Lamb, Ed Lane, Mark Weber, and Michael Kelly for their invaluable assistance.

IDW® Licensed By: Hasbro
www.IDWPUBLISHING.com
IDW founded by Ted Adams, Alex Garner, Kris Oprisko, and Robbie Robbins

Ted Adams, CEO & Publisher
Greg Goldstein, President & COO
Robbie Robbins, EVP/Sr. Graphic Artist
Chris Ryall, Chief Creative Officer/Editor-in-Chief
Matthew Ruzicka, CPA, Chief Financial Officer
Alan Payne, VP of Sales
Dirk Wood, VP of Marketing
Lorelei Bunjes, VP of Digital Services
Jeff Webber, VP of Digital Publishing & Business Development

Facebook: facebook.com/idwpublishing
Twitter: @idwpublishing
YouTube: youtube.com/idwpublishing
Instagram: instagram.com/idwpublishing
deviantART: idwpublishing.deviantart.com
Pinterest: pinterest.com/idwpublishing/idw-staff-faves

THE TRANSFORMERS: DRIFT—EMPIRE OF STONE #3. JANUARY 2015. FIRST PRINTING. HASBRO and its logo, TRANSFORMERS, and all related characters are trademarks of Hasbro and are used with permission. © 2015 Hasbro. All Rights Reserved. IDW Publishing, a division of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Editorial offices: 5080 Santa Fe St., San Diego, CA 92109. The IDW logo is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Any similarities to persons living or dead are purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Idea and Design Works, LLC.
Printed in USA.
IDW Publishing does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork.


MY NAME IS DRIFT.
I USED TO BE A DECEPTICON CALLED DEADLOCK.
AFTER THAT I WAS AN AUTOBOT FOR, WELL, NOT ALL THAT LONG ACTUALLY.
RIGHT NOW...
I KIND OF FEEL LIKE THIS IS ALL MY FAULT.

EARLIER.
THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT.
HELLBAT?!
SO YOU KNEW? YOU KNEW THE ARMY WAS HERE ALL ALONG? BUT GIGATRON...
GIGATRON BELIEVES WHATEVER I TELL HIM.
I CAME ACROSS THE ARMY WITHIN DAYS OF ARRIVING HERE. HIDING AND RESTRICTING ITS LOCATION WAS SIMPLE.
YOU'RE EXPERIMENTING ON THEM.
THEY'RE COMPLEX LIFEFORMS BUT THEY REFUSE TO WAKE, NOTHING I DID WOULD WORK.
I EXPECT THE MONKS COULD HAVE WOKEN THEM BUT THEN, THEY'RE NO LONGER WITH US, ARE THEY, DRIFT?
MONKS?
SO YOU FOUND ANOTHER WAY TO CONTROL THEM.
IT TOOK A LOT OF WORK AND A LOT OF DEAD AUTOBOTS... AND DECEPTICONS... BUT I FOUND A WAY.

"FOR EVERY *LIVING* CYBERTRONIAN THAT FOUND THEIR WAY TO MY TABLE, I WAS GRANTED A HANDFUL OF FUNCTIONING WARRIORS.
"*MINDLESS*, BUT FUNCTIONING NONETHELESS."
YOU'RE CANNIBALIZING YOUR OWN KIND FOR *SPARE PARTS*?! THAT'S SICK!
YET EFFECTIVE. WHY DO YOU THINK I ALLOWED YOU TO GAIN ACCESS TO THIS CHAMBER?
CAN'T LET YOU GO TO WASTE...
SO YOU'VE BEEN CAPTURING AND KILLING AUTOBOTS AND DECEPTICONS TO MAKE YOURSELF AN ARMY?
ONE THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO CONTROL ABSOLUTELY.
FOR WHAT?!
TO KILL.
KILL WHAT?
EVERYTHING.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED? A MILLION YEARS? MORE?
WHAT ARE WE?
WE CAN ALTER OUR BODIES... OVERCOME, ADAPT. WE HARDLY AGE, OR GET SICK...
I'VE WATCHED RACES DIE.
I'VE WATCHED CIVILIZATIONS, CULTURES, WHOLE WORLDS DIE.
AND HERE I AM, STILL LIVING. ETERNAL.
WHAT DO WE DO? WHAT IS THE POINT OF US?
WE DON'T REPRODUCE, WE DON'T CREATE. WHAT ARE WE?
MILLIONS OF YEARS AND WHAT HAVE WE DONE?
KILL. OUR OWN KIND... OTHERS...
THAT IS WHAT WE ARE, THAT IS WHY WE'RE HERE. MACHINES OF WAR, OF DEATH.
THESE HANDS... I HAVE KILLED COUNTLESS BEINGS WITH THESE HANDS.
ALL THOSE LIVES I'VE TAKEN, I REMEMBER EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM. CENTURIES OF KILLING AS THOUGH IT WAS YESTERDAY.
YOU'RE INSANE.
WHY?
BECAUSE I ADMIT TO ENJOYING IT? I DON'T NEED A WAR TO HIDE BEHIND.
HOW MANY HAVE YOU KILLED?

HOW MANY HAVE *YOU?*
I DON'T KILL, NOT ANYMORE, NOT *EVER* AGAIN.

WONDERFUL.
I'M SURE *THEY'RE* OVERJOYED TO HEAR IT.

"THEY"?
WHAT'S THE MATTER, AUTOBOT, HAVEN'T YOU WONDERED WHAT ALL THOSE PILES OF RUBBLE ARE SCATTERED ABOUT THE FORTRESS?
HELLBAT...

IT'S THE *MONKS*, THE PEACEFUL STONE BEINGS DRIFT AND TURMOIL DISCOVERED AND THEN *SLAUGHTERED* WHEN THEY FIRST FOUND THIS PLACE CENTURIES AGO.
HELLBAT!

RUN FROM WHO YOU ARE ALL YOU WANT. I *KNOW* WHAT I AM, WHAT WE *ALL* ARE.
AND WHEN I'VE CONVERTED ENOUGH OF THESE THINGS I'M GOING TO SLAUGHTER GIGATRON, HIS MEN, AND ANYTHING ELSE THAT STANDS IN MY WAY!

YOU KNOW, FOR A WHILE THERE I THOUGHT I HAD NO CHANCE OF FINDING YOU, BATFACE... BUT THEN I REMEMBERED... YOU NEVER SHUT UP.
GOOD HEARING.
TAKE THEM!
I NEED THEM ALIVE!
NOT A CHANCE!

IT'S YOU AND ME, BATTY!
OOF!
SHALL WE?
SHINK
SHINK
LET GO!
NO WAY, FOUR-EYES!

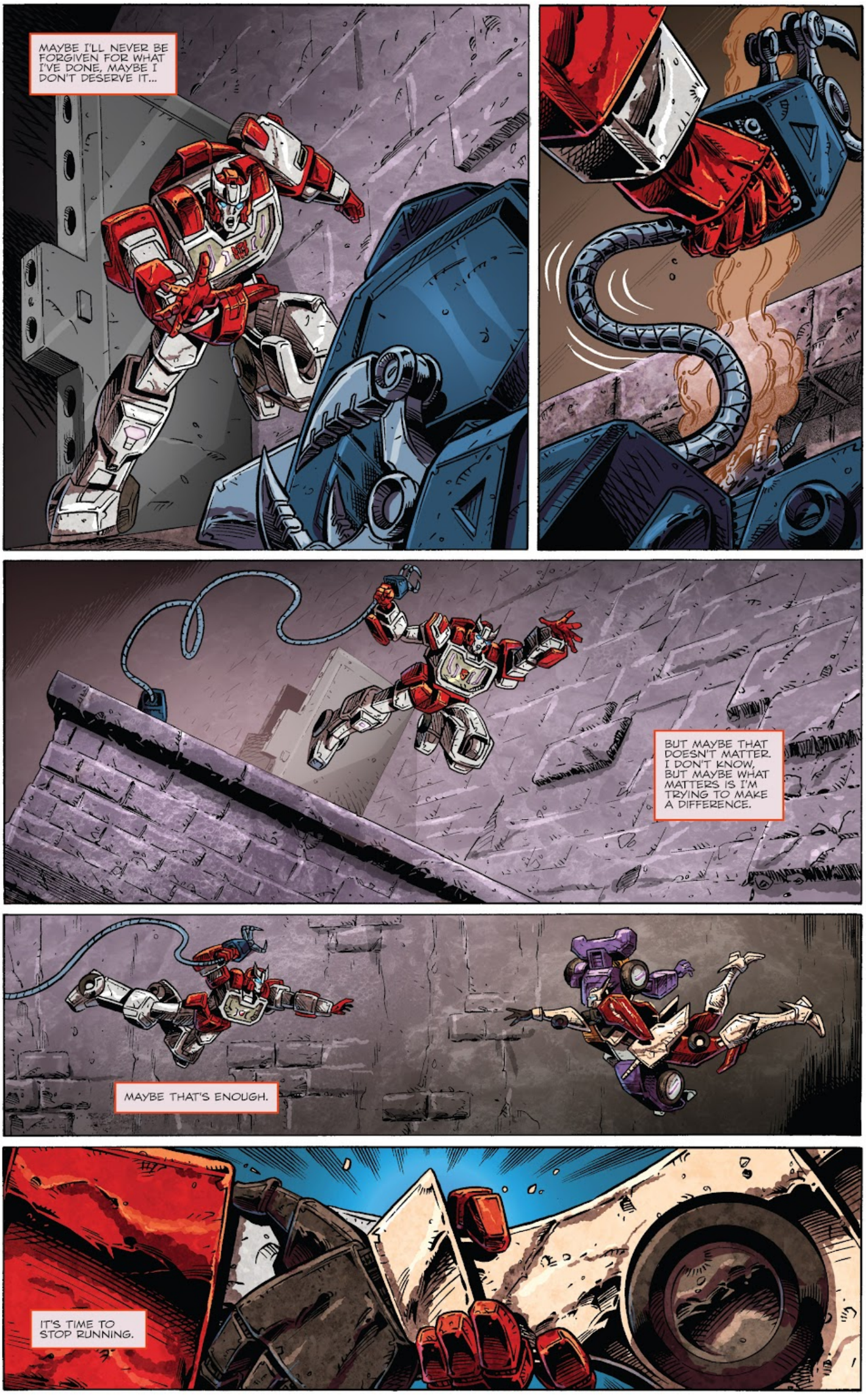
SLOW.
CLUMSY.
TO THINK I HEARD YOU WERE GOOD...
OKAY, TWO IT IS THEN.
VANQUISH!
GONNA KILL YOU.
GET HIM OFF ME!

ANOTHER TIME, AUTOBOT...
NO!

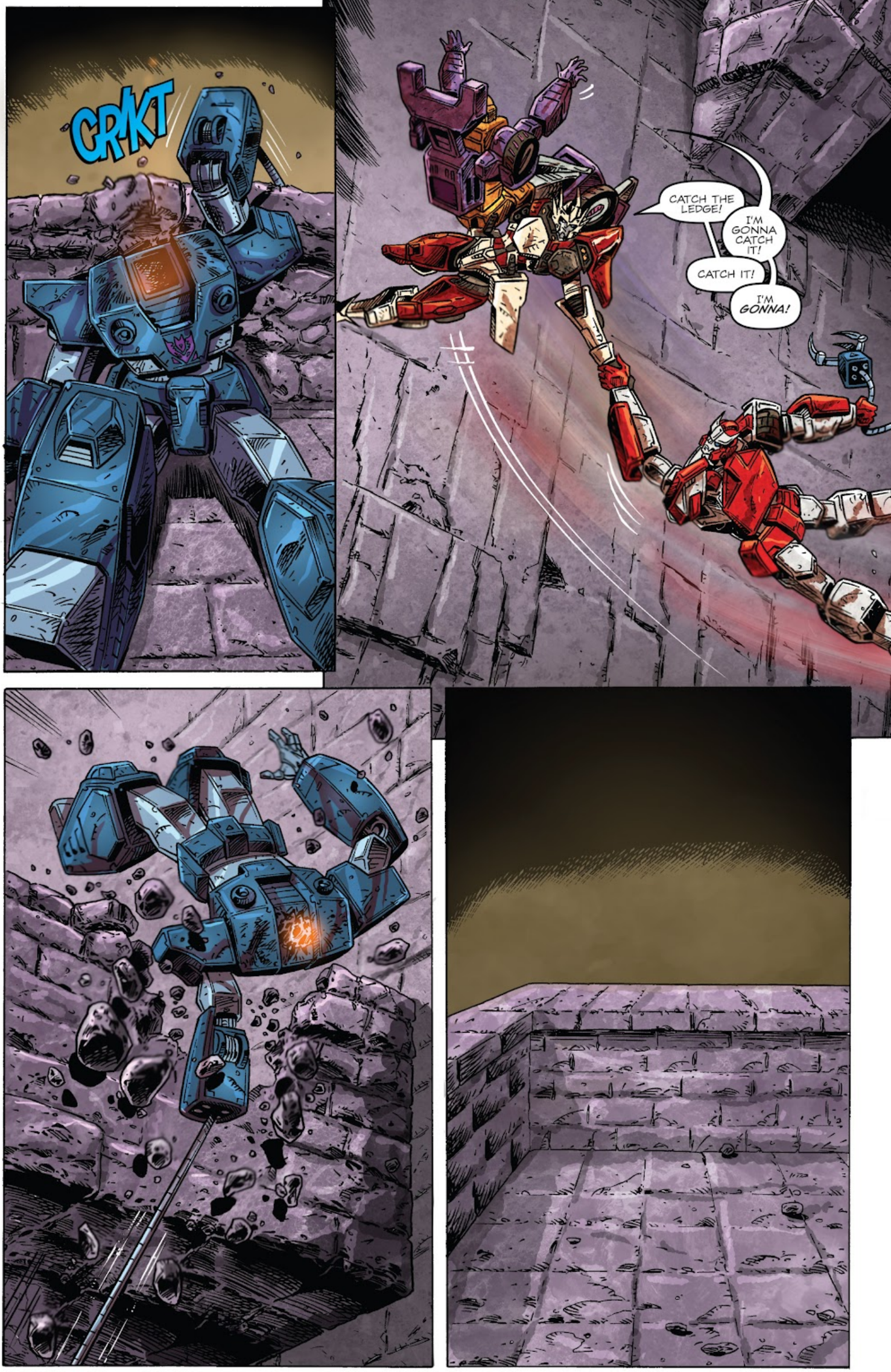
ENOUGH OF THIS...
HE'S UP TO SOMETHING!
THE STONE ARMY!
HE'S GOING TO ACTIVATE THE ARMY!
VANQUISH!
ON IT!

RATCHET!
WHAT?!
GRAPPLE HOOK!
WHAT—
SERIOUSLY?!

HELLBAT'S CRAZY BUT HE'S RIGHT.
I'VE BEEN RUNNING THIS WHOLE TIME.
RUNNING FROM WHO I AM, FROM WHAT I'VE DONE.
PUNISHING MYSELF.
THERE'S A SIDE OF ME THAT SCARES ME. LIKE YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE.
I'VE TRIED TO HIDE FROM IT... LONER ONE DAY, SPIRITUALIST THE NEXT...
BUT IT'S JUST EATING AWAY AT ME.


MAYBE I'LL NEVER BE FORGIVEN FOR WHAT I'VE DONE, MAYBE I DON'T DESERVE IT...
BUT MAYBE THAT DOESN'T MATTER. I DON'T KNOW, BUT MAYBE WHAT MATTERS IS I'M TRYING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
MAYBE THAT'S ENOUGH.
IT'S TIME TO STOP RUNNING.

HOLD ON!


CRKT
CATCH THE LEDGE!
I'M GONNA CATCH IT!
CATCH IT!
I'M GONNA!

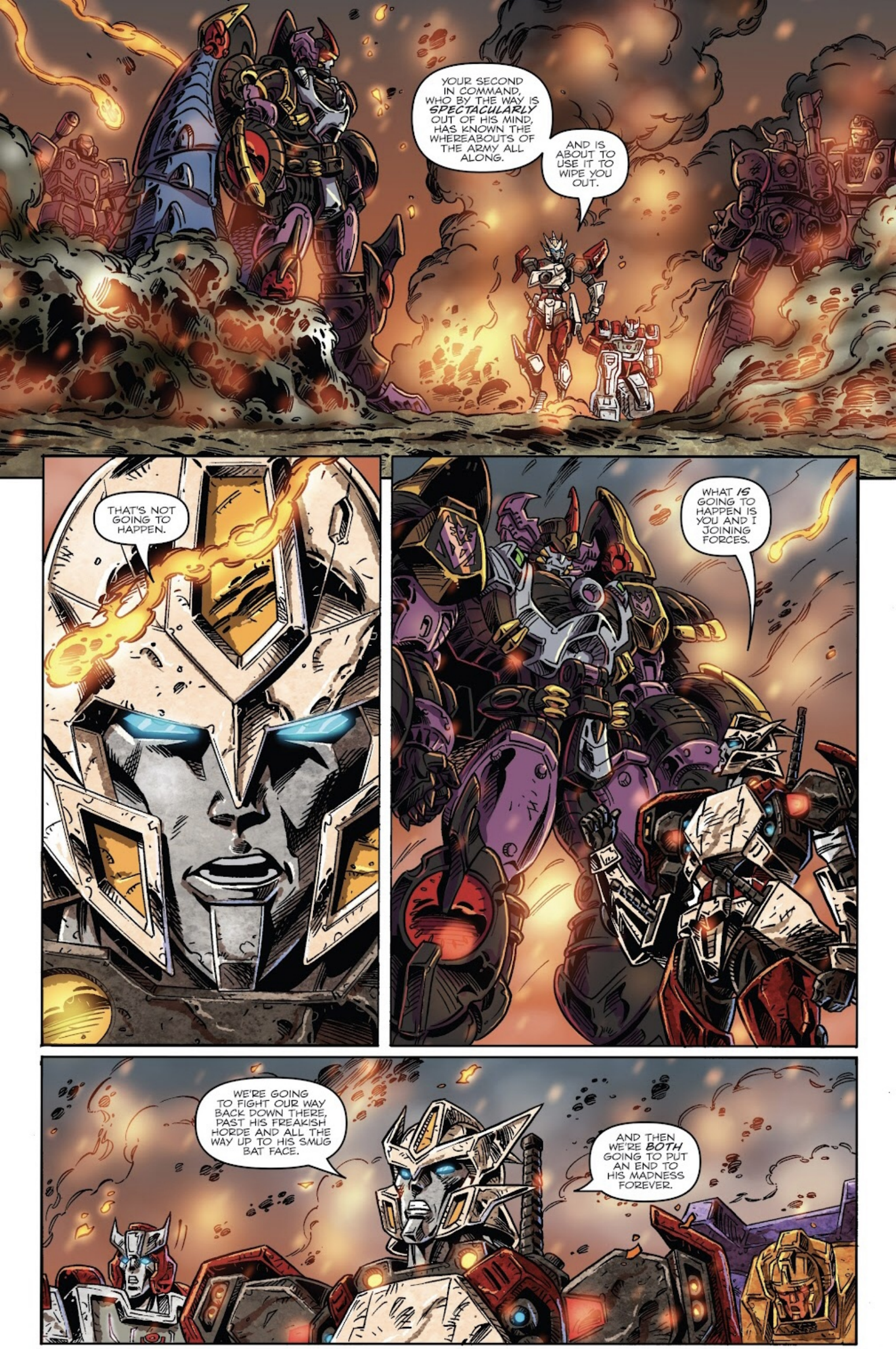
I HATE BOTH OF YOU.
SO MUCH.
YOU SAVED MY LIFE... AGAIN.
LOOK!
"WE'RE TOO LATE.
"ANY MINUTE NOW WE'RE GOING TO BE DROWNING THOSE THINGS."

GO.
NOW!
WE NEED TO GET OUT OF HERE AND WARN THE AUTOBOTS.
WE'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
IT'S ABOUT TO BE WALL-TO-WALL MAYHEM IN HERE AND YOU WANT TO GET IN THE *MIDDLE* OF IT?!
WE'RE *ALREADY* IN THE MIDDLE OF IT!
WE FORCED HELLBAT'S HAND AND NOW HE'S MAKING HIS MOVE AGAINST GIGATRON.
REGARDLESS OF WHO WINS THAT FIGHT, IT'LL BE A RACE TO USE THOSE STONE WARRIORS AGAINST ANY OR ALL NEIGHBORING PLANETS.
THERE'S NO WAY WE GET BACK IN TIME TO STOP THAT.
WE NEED TO SHUT THAT ARMY DOWN IF WE HAVE ANY HOPE OF SAVING INNOCENT LIVES.
AND IN ORDER TO DO THAT, WE NEED TO PICK A SIDE.

GIGATRON!
FOUND YOUR ARMY...

YOU DID THIS!
NOT ME... HELLBAT.
YOU'VE BEEN BETRAYED, GIGATRON.
GRRRRR-RAH!

WHOA.


YOUR SECOND IN COMMAND, WHO BY THE WAY IS SPECTACULARLY OUT OF HIS MIND, HAS KNOWN THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE ARMY ALL ALONG.
AND IS ABOUT TO USE IT TO WIPE YOU OUT.
THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.
WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN IS YOU AND I JOINING FORCES.
WE'RE GOING TO FIGHT OUR WAY BACK DOWN THERE, PAST HIS FREAKISH HORDE AND ALL THE WAY UP TO HIS SMUG BAT FACE.
AND THEN WE'RE BOTH GOING TO PUT AN END TO HIS MADNESS FOREVER.

ANY QUESTIONS?

IDW
THE TRANSFORMERS
#4
McCARTHY
GUIDI
FERREIRA
BASKERVILLE
BOVE
DRIFT
EMPIRE OF STONE

Cast off from the Autobots after taking the blame for a crime he didn't commit, the former Decepticon Drift teams with his frenemy Ratchet and a captured Decepticon called Grit. Confronted by Gigatron, a Deception warlord (and former ally of Drift) who searches an alien world for a long-lost stone army, the trio escapes and finds the army—which Gigatron's cruel second-in-command Hellbat reveals is in his control. With options running out, Drift makes a deal with Gigatron to confront the real enemy...

Written by: SHANE MCCARTHY
Breakdowns by: GUIDO GUIDI
Pencils pages 5-10 by: MARCELO FERREIRA
Finishes by: STEPHEN BASKERVILLE
Colors by: JOHN-PAUL BOVE
Letters by: TOM B. LONG
Editor: JOHN BARBER

AUTHENTIC TRANSFORMERS

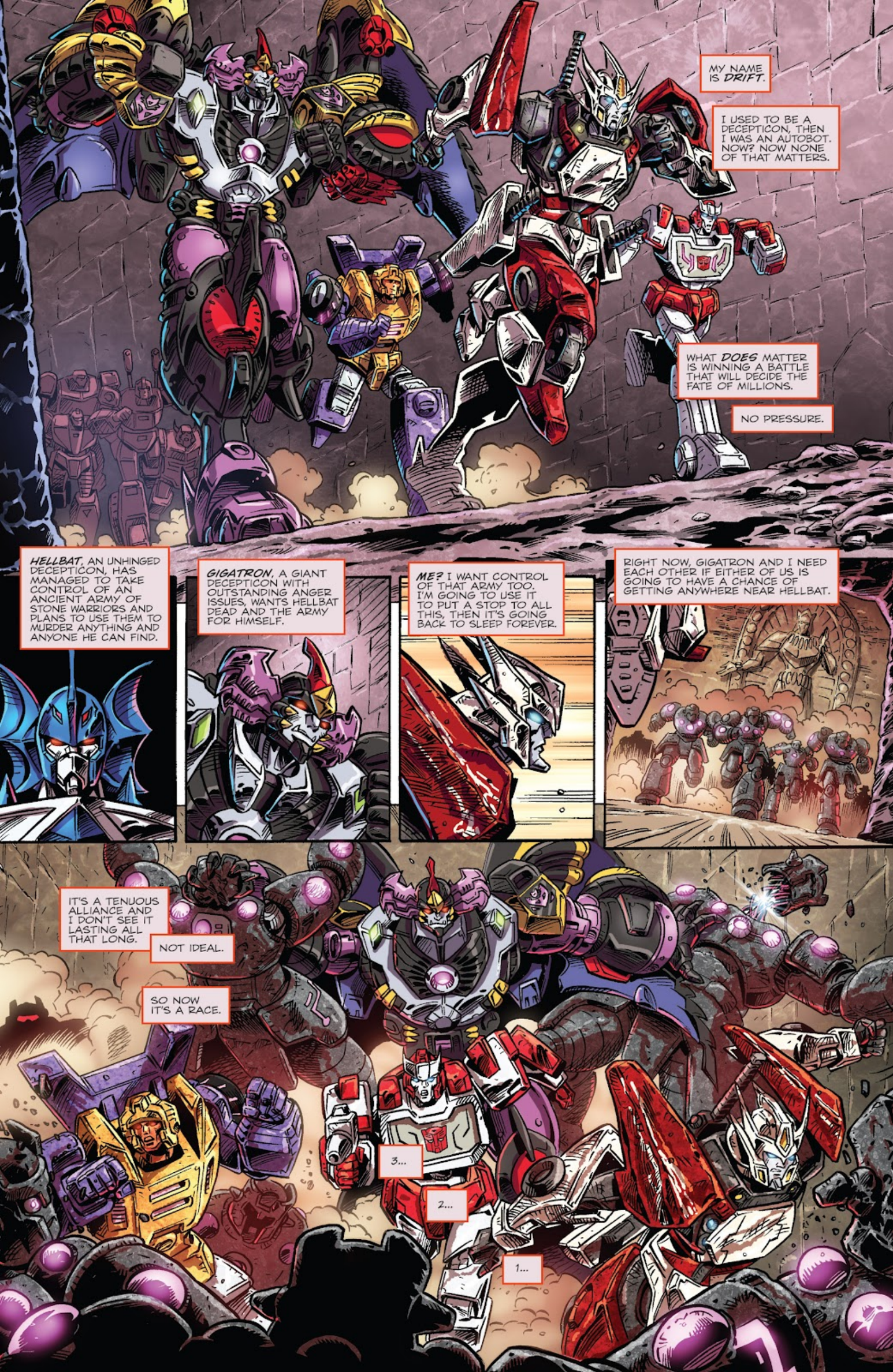
Special thanks to Hasbro's Clint Chapman, Heather Hopkins, Jerry Jivoin, Joshua Lamb, Ed Lane, Mark Weber, and Michael Kelly for their invaluable assistance.

IDW Licensed by: Hasbro
www.IDWPUBLISHING.com
IDW founded by Ted Adams, Alex Garner, Kris Oprisko, and Robbie Robbins

Ted Adams, CEO & Publisher
Greg Goldstein, President & COO
Robbie Robbins, EVP/Sr. Graphic Artist
Chris Ryall, Chief Creative Officer/Editor-in-Chief
Matthew Ruzicka, CPA, Chief Financial Officer
Alan Payne, VP of Sales
Dirk Wood, VP of Marketing
Lorelei Bunjes, VP of Digital Services
Jeff Webber, VP of Digital Publishing & Business Development

Facebook: facebook.com/idwpublishing
Twitter: @idwpublishing
YouTube: youtube.com/idwpublishing
Instagram: instagram.com/idwpublishing
deviantART: idwpublishing.deviantart.com
Pinterest: pinterest.com/idwpublishing/idw-staff-faves

THE TRANSFORMERS: DRIFT—EMPIRE OF STONE #4. FEBRUARY 2015. FIRST PRINTING. HASBRO and its logo, TRANSFORMERS, and all related characters are trademarks of Hasbro and are used with permission. © 2015 Hasbro. All Rights Reserved. IDW Publishing, a division of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Editorial offices: 5080 Santa Fe St., San Diego, CA 92109. The IDW logo is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Any similarities to persons living or dead are purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Idea and Design Works, LLC.
Printed in USA.
IDW Publishing does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork.


MY NAME IS *DRIFT*.
I USED TO BE A DECEPTICON, THEN I WAS AN AUTOBOT. NOW? NOW NONE OF THAT MATTERS.
WHAT *DOES* MATTER IS WINNING A BATTLE THAT WILL DECIDE THE FATE OF MILLIONS.
NO PRESSURE.
HELLBAT, AN UNHINGED DECEPTICON, HAS MANAGED TO TAKE CONTROL OF AN ANCIENT ARMY OF STONE WARRIORS AND PLANS TO USE THEM TO MURDER ANYTHING AND ANYONE HE CAN FIND.
GIGATRON, A GIANT DECEPTICON WITH OUTSTANDING ANGER ISSUES, WANTS HELLBAT DEAD AND THE ARMY FOR HIMSELF.
ME? I WANT CONTROL OF THAT ARMY TOO. I'M GOING TO USE IT TO PUT A STOP TO ALL THIS, THEN IT'S GOING BACK TO SLEEP FOREVER.
RIGHT NOW, GIGATRON AND I NEED EACH OTHER IF EITHER OF US IS GOING TO HAVE A CHANCE OF GETTING ANYWHERE NEAR HELLBAT.
IT'S A TENUOUS ALLIANCE AND I DON'T SEE IT LASTING ALL THAT LONG.
NOT IDEAL.
SO NOW IT'S A RACE.
3...
2...
1...

GO!
HOLD THE LINE!
FOR EVERY WARRIOR WE DESTROY MY ARMY DIMINISHES.
GIGATRON!
YOU'VE SERVED YOUR PURPOSE, "DRIFT," YOU SHOWED ME WHERE HE IS.
CONTINUE TO DISTRACT THE ARMY...

IT'S TIME I CLAIMED MY PRIZE.
HELLBAT! BETRAYER!
ALL BLUSTER AND BRAVADO.
YOU BORE ME.
GRR CRAK!

I PREPARED HIM ESPECIALLY FOR YOU.
HGN!
GUHH!

HELLBAT'S DISTRACTED...
NOW.
THIS IS MY CHANCE.
IF I CAN JUST—
NOT GONNA HAPPEN.
BOY, DO I REALLY *HATE* THIS GUY.
OUT OF THE WAY, KNIVES!

GO!
I GOT THIS!
I SAID GO!
OH, COME ON!

GIGATRON, GET UP. IF HELLBAT WINS, WE BOTH LOSE.
HELP ME, I NEED TO GET TO HIM FAST.
MANEUVER SEVEN.
NOW YOU'RE TALKING.

HELLBAT!
NO...
GET BACK HERE!

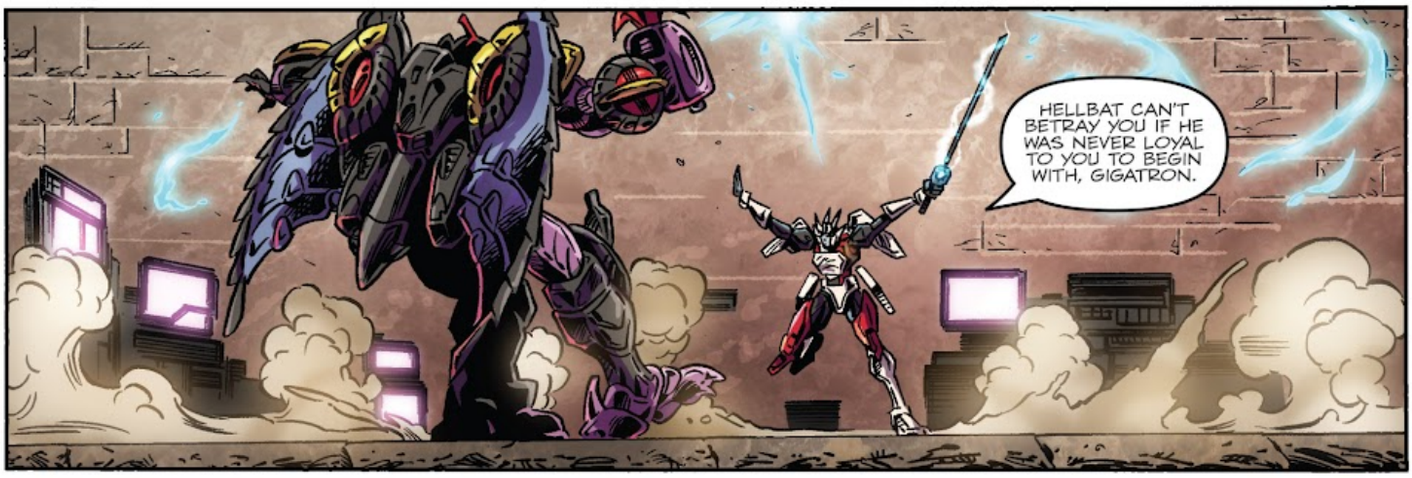
GUH!
YOU ARE WEAK, YOU ARE NOTHING!
YOU TURN AGAINST YOUR OWN KIND AND FOR WHAT?!
YOU'RE NOT...MY... KIND.
I'M GOING TO SLICE YOUR SPARK IN TWO.
THEN I'M GOING TO DO THE SAME TO YOUR AUTOBOT FRIEND.
IF YOU WERE SMART, YOU WOULD HAVE LEFT WHEN YOU HAD THE CHANCE.
WE ALL MAKE CHOICES, I MADE MINE.
RRRRR!

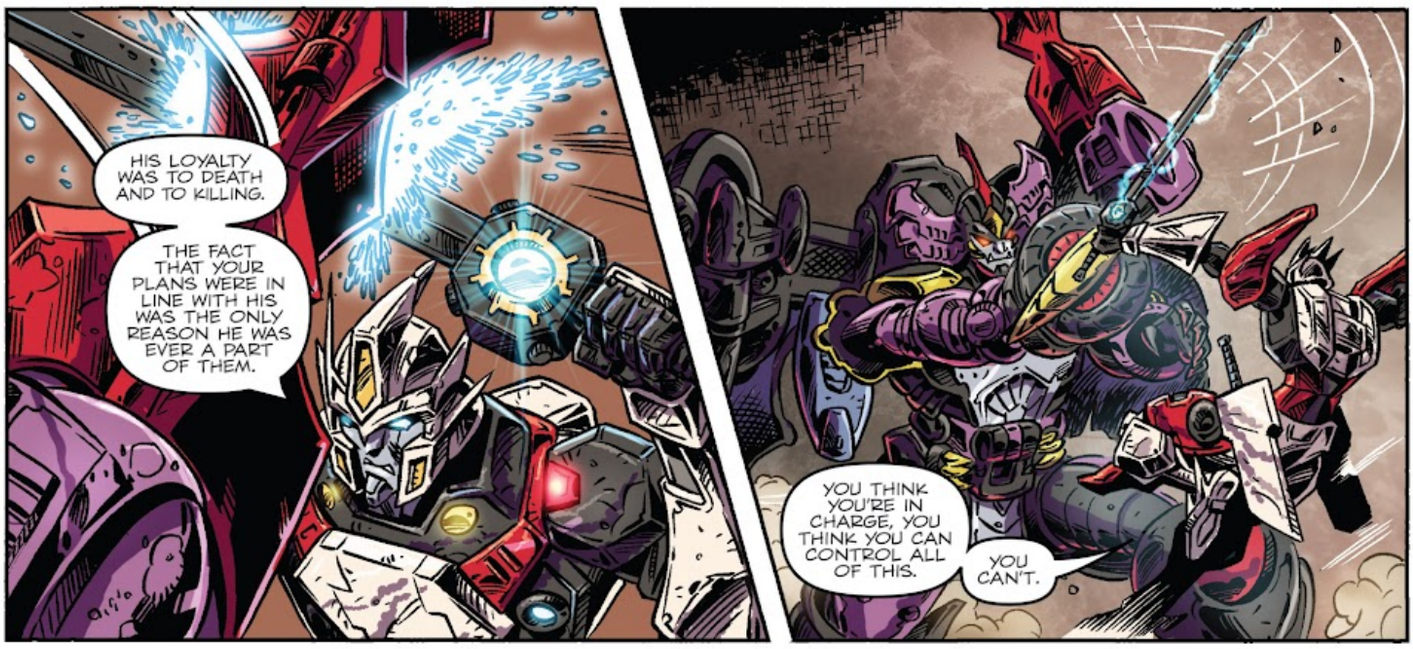
AACHHH!
AND I DON'T...
...DO...
...SMART...
GRIT!

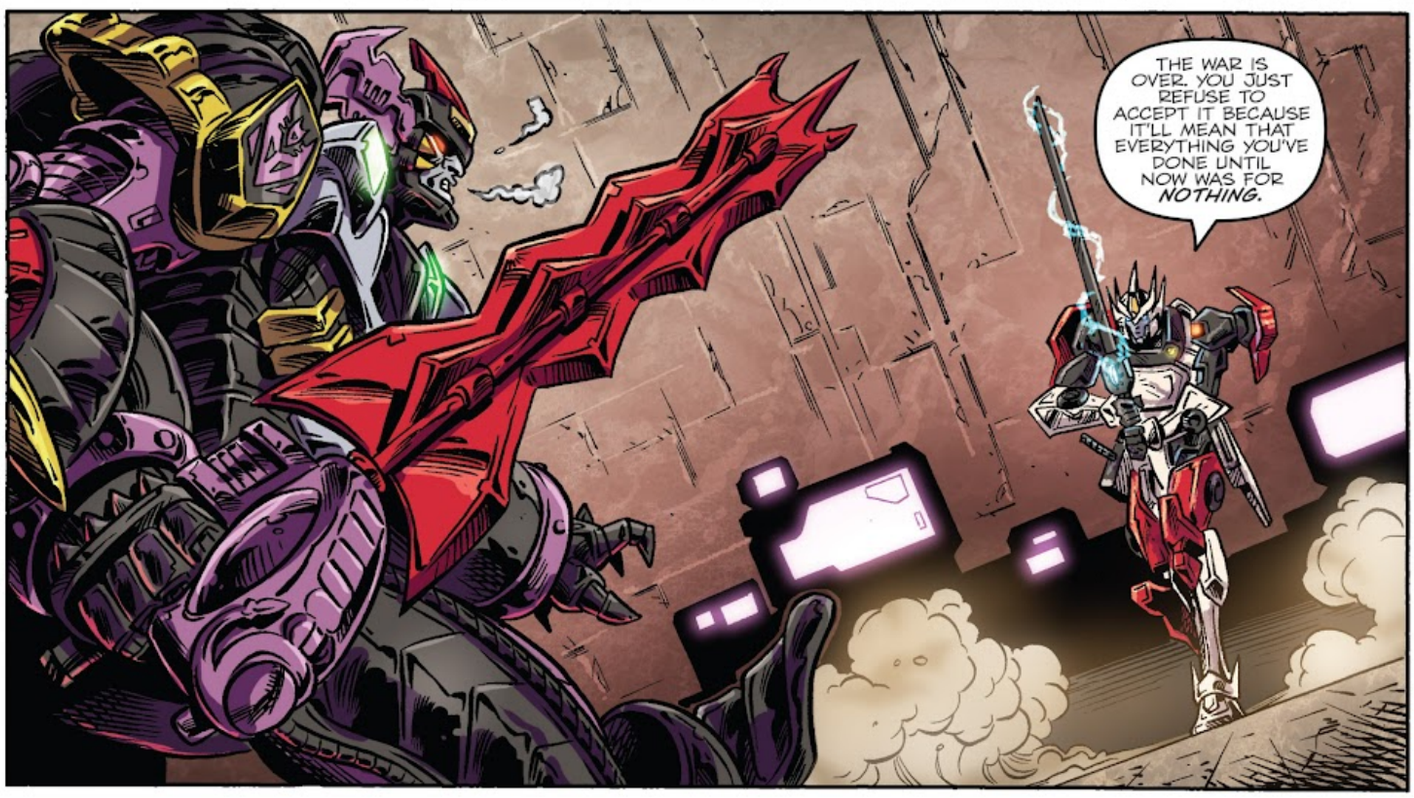
YOUR FRIEND IS DEAD.
YOUR ALLIES ARE LOSING.
HERE WE ARE AGAIN, YOU AND I, AGENTS OF DEATH.
DRIFT!
EITHER I KILL YOU. OR YOU KILL ME.
IT'S NOW OR NEVER!
WHAT ELSE IS THERE?

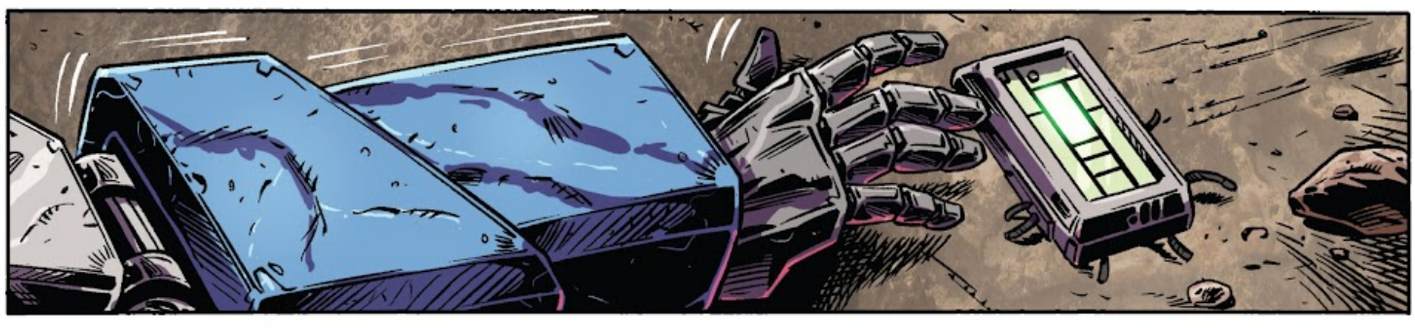
IT WASN'T ALL THAT LONG AGO I WAS WHERE YOU ARE NOW, SWIMMING IN DEATH, UNABLE TO SEE THERE WAS A CHOICE.
LIKE YOU, I HAD CENTURIES OF KILLING BEHIND ME, AND LIKE YOU, I FELT THAT NEVER-ENDING CYCLE HAD CHANGED ME, TWISTING ME INTO SOMETHING ELSE.
LUCKILY, SOMEONE SHOWED ME I HAD A CHOICE.
HIS NAME WAS WING, HE WAS ONE OF US AND HE SHOWED ME WHAT WE CAN CREATE AND WHAT WE'RE CAPABLE OF.
MAYBE I HAVE TOO MUCH BLOOD ON MY HANDS TO EVER BE A HERO LIKE HIM, BUT I WILL TELL YOU THIS...
CHANGE IS POSSIBLE—WE ARE MORE THAN THIS.
DEATH ISN'T THE ONLY WAY.

KEEP TELLING YOURSELF THAT.
WHILE I CUT YOU IN TWO.
YOU AND THIS BETRAYER.


HELLBAT CAN'T BETRAY YOU IF HE WAS NEVER LOYAL TO YOU TO BEGIN WITH, GIGATRON.

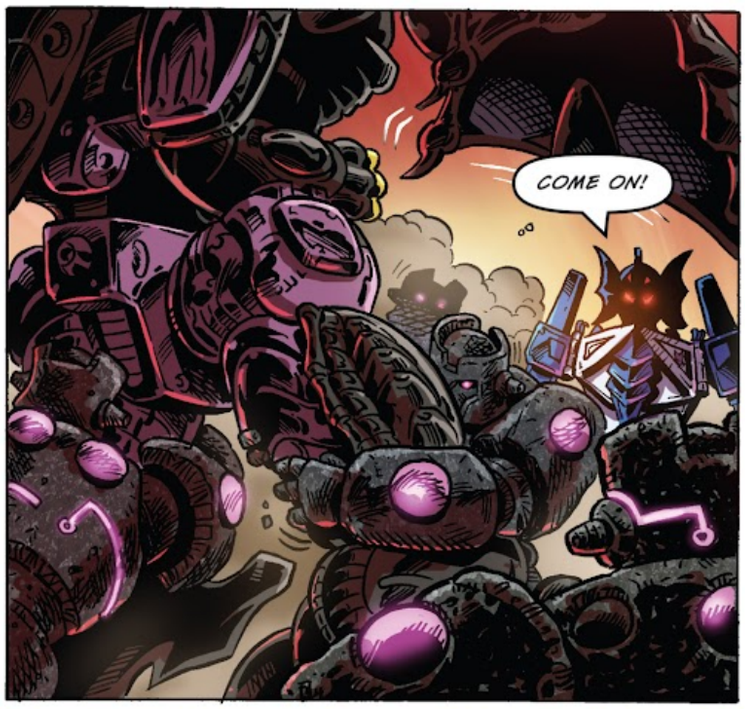

HIS LOYALTY WAS TO DEATH AND TO KILLING.
THE FACT THAT YOUR PLANS WERE IN LINE WITH HIS WAS THE ONLY REASON HE WAS EVER A PART OF THEM.
YOU THINK YOU'RE IN CHARGE, YOU THINK YOU CAN CONTROL ALL OF THIS.
YOU CAN'T.


THE WAR IS OVER. YOU JUST REFUSE TO ACCEPT IT BECAUSE IT'LL MEAN THAT EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE UNTIL NOW WAS FOR *NOTHING.*



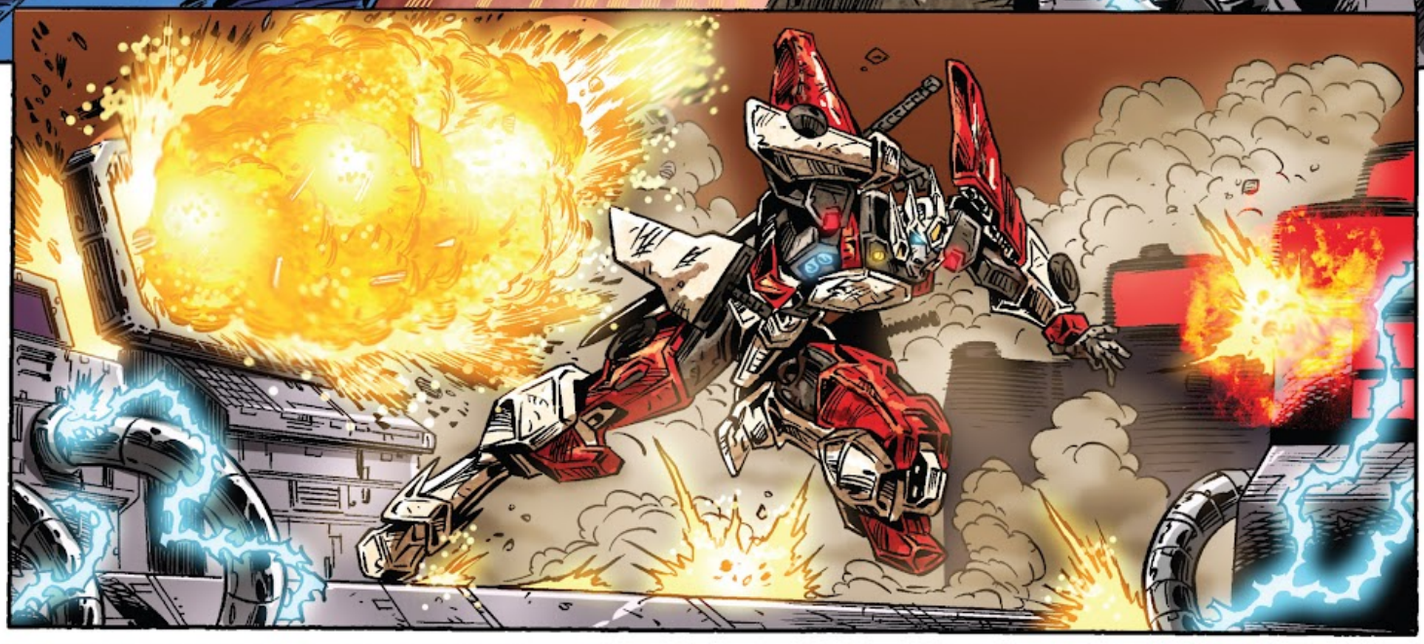
YOU LOSE, GIGATRON.
I'LL KILL YOU.
I'M ORDERING EVERY SINGLE STONE WARRIOR AT MY COMMAND TO TEAR YOU APART.
I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU TRY.
HAHAHAHA

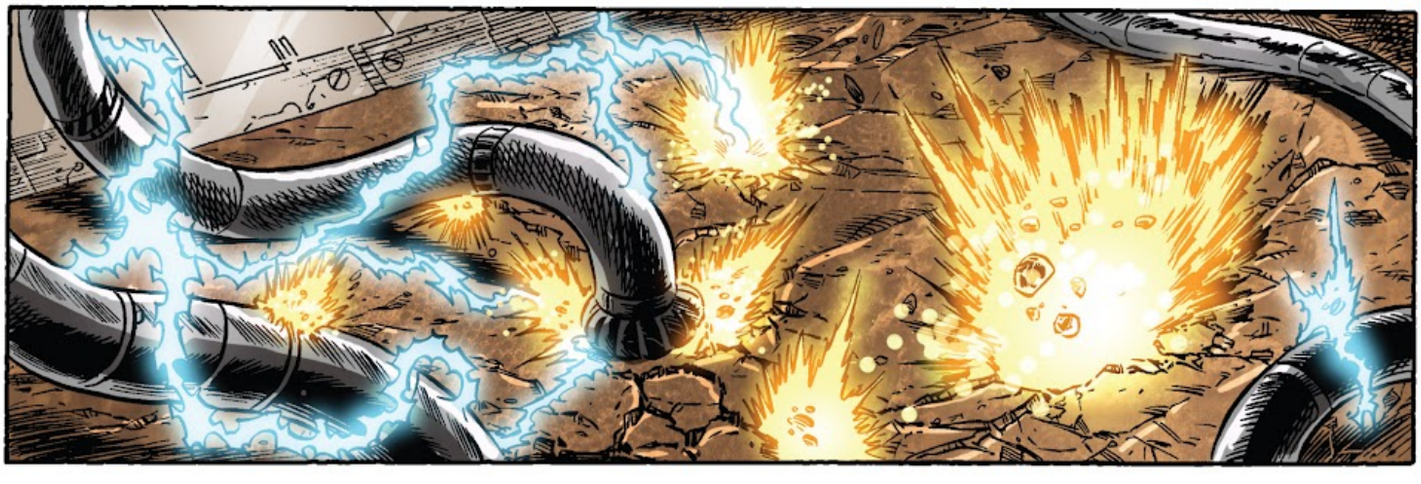
COME ON.


COME ON!

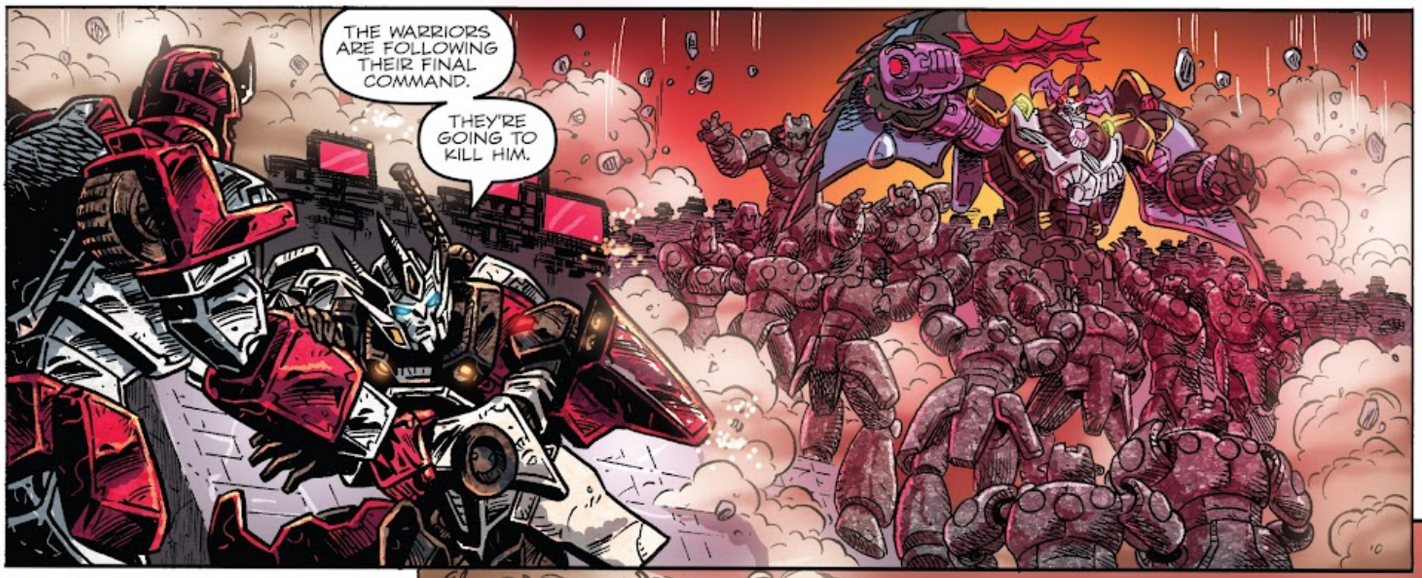
GIGATRON, NO!

DO IT!





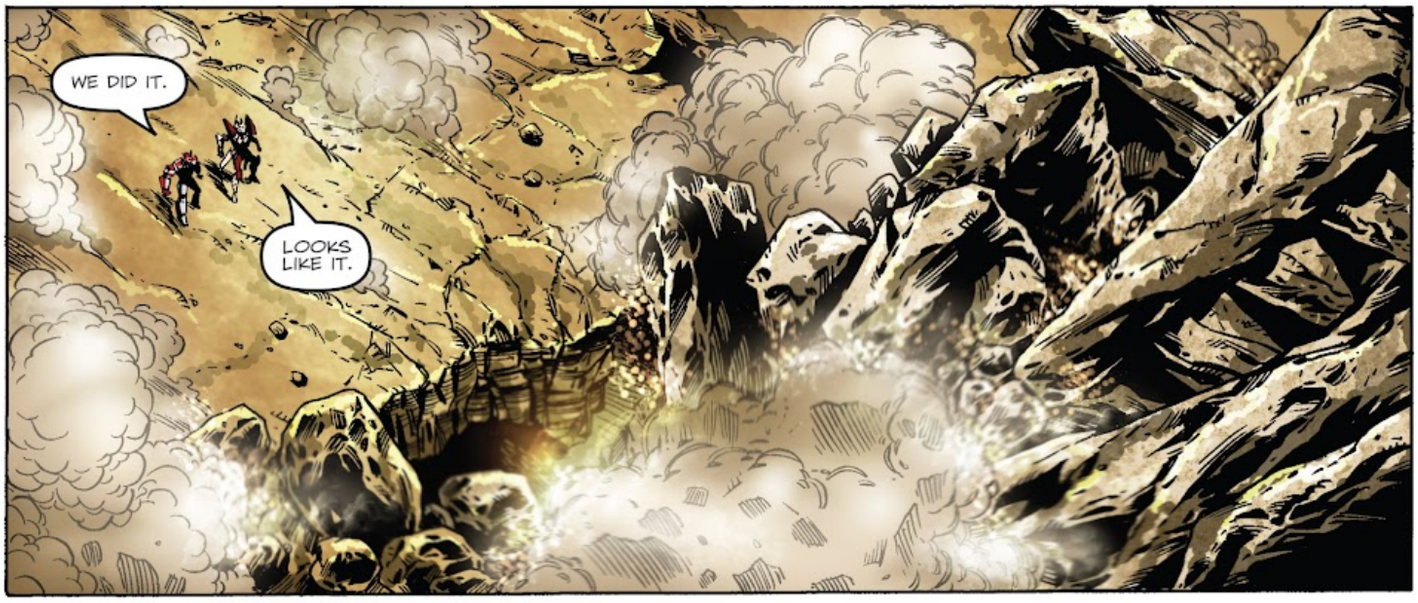
DRIFT!


THE WARRIORS ARE FOLLOWING THEIR FINAL COMMAND.
THEY'RE GOING TO KILL HIM.

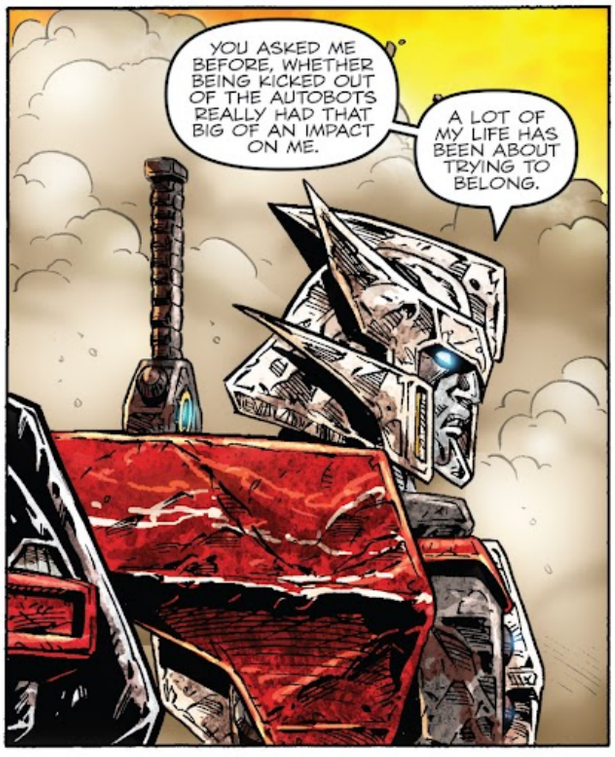
THE COMMAND PLATFORM HAS BEEN DAMAGED.

IT'S STARTED A CHAIN REACTION!

THIS PLACE ISN'T GOING TO LAST LONG.


WE DID IT.
LOOKS LIKE IT.

AND NOW?
WELL, I COULD DO WITH NEVER COMING BACK *HERE* AGAIN.
AND THE *LOST LIGHT*?


YOU ASKED ME BEFORE, WHETHER BEING KICKED OUT OF THE AUTOBOTS REALLY HAD THAT BIG OF AN IMPACT ON ME.
A LOT OF MY LIFE HAS BEEN ABOUT TRYING TO BELONG.

I DIDN'T BELONG IN THE DECEPTICONS. THEN IT SEEMED I DIDN'T BELONG IN THE AUTOBOTS EITHER.
I HONESTLY WASN'T SURE *WHAT* I WAS AFTER THAT.
IT FELT LIKE UNTIL THEN MY ONLY PURPOSE WAS TO BE A KILLER FOR ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER.

THAT ALL I COULD OFFER THE UNIVERSE WAS DEATH.
THAT'S NO WAY TO LIVE.

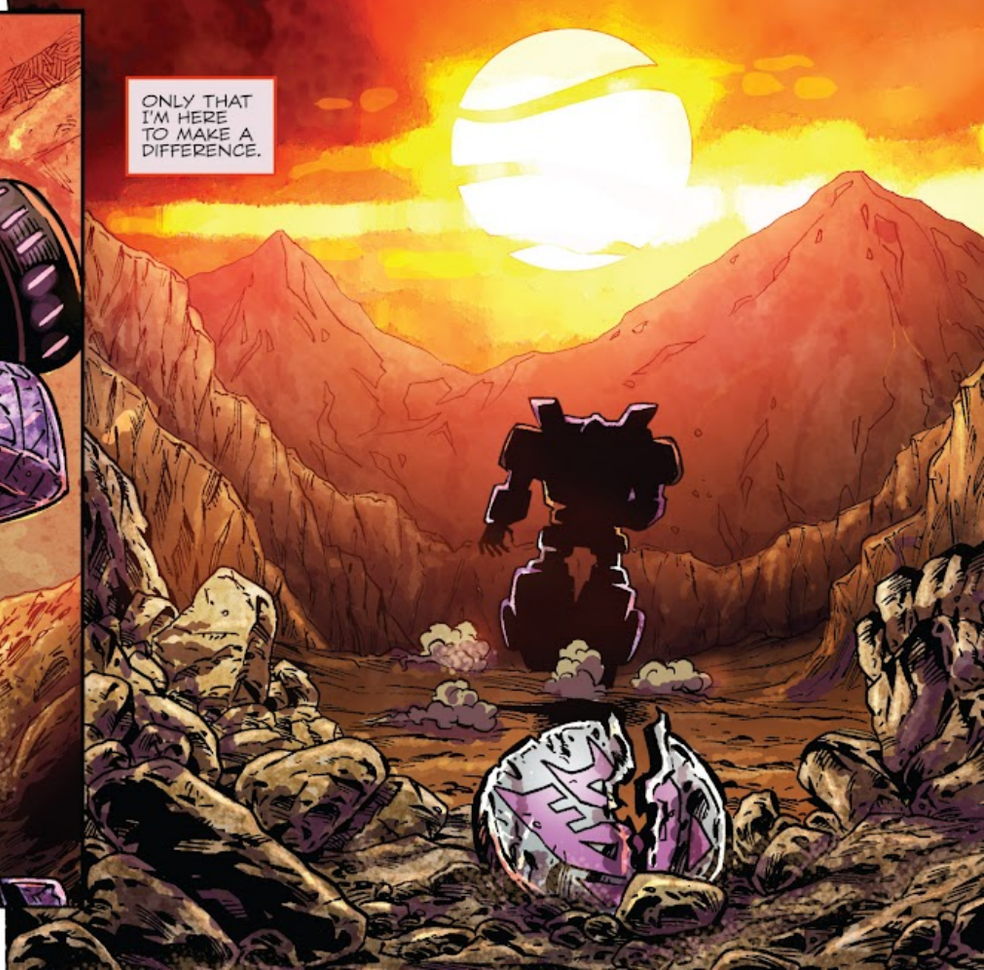
HELLBAT WAS SO TWISTED BY YEARS OF KILLING THAT DEATH WAS SOMETHING HE WELCOMED, SOMETHING HE THOUGHT HE DESERVED.
IN SOME WAYS I KNOW HOW HE FELT.
THAT'S PRETTY STUPID.
YOU'RE PRETTY STUPID.
THE POINT IS I KNOW THAT I'M MORE THAN THAT NOW...
I KNOW THAT I CAN OFFER MORE THAN THAT.
IF THERE'S ONE THING ALL OF THIS HAS GIVEN ME, IT'S CLARITY.
SO COME WITH ME BACK TO THE LOST LIGHT.
COME BACK. IF NOT AS AN AUTOBOT...
...THEN AS A FRIEND.

MY NAME IS DRIFT.

I WAS A DECEPTICON ONCE, A REAL PIECE OF WORK.
THEN I WAS AN AUTOBOT.

NOW?

NOW IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT I AM...


ONLY THAT I'M HERE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.